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ABSTRACT

This issue of the journal, "Seeds of Innovation," focuses on the teacher as learner, on creating successful supportive learning environments for professional growth and development. It draws from experiences of Tennessee adult basic education (ABE) practitioners who participated in the 1993-94 Literacy Trainers Institutes and the 1994-95 Learner at the Center Institutes conducted by the Center for Literacy Studies, as well as from other work. The issue is organized into five chapters. Chapter 1 is an introduction to participatory staff development. Chapter 2 covers planning staff development, taking into account participants' needs, developing a vision, and clarifying theories and models of education and staff development. Chapter 3 describes the process of designing an event, putting together the agenda of what will happen, selecting activities, and taking care of logistics. Chapter 4 deals with facilitation skills and challenges; chapter 5 discusses evaluation. Three appendixes provide additional resources: (1) information about the Institutes and the long-range staff development plan; (2) more resources for activities; and (3) a list of 52 resources for participatory staff development. Personal reflections, insights, and learning activities are interspersed throughout the chapters. (KC)

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Teacher as Learner

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A Sourcebook for Participatory Staff Development

CE 076 645

Tennessee Literacy Resource Center
Center for Literacy Studies

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SEEDS OF INNOVATION

Teacher as Learner

A Sourcebook for Participatory Staff Development

Beth Bingman and Brenda Bell

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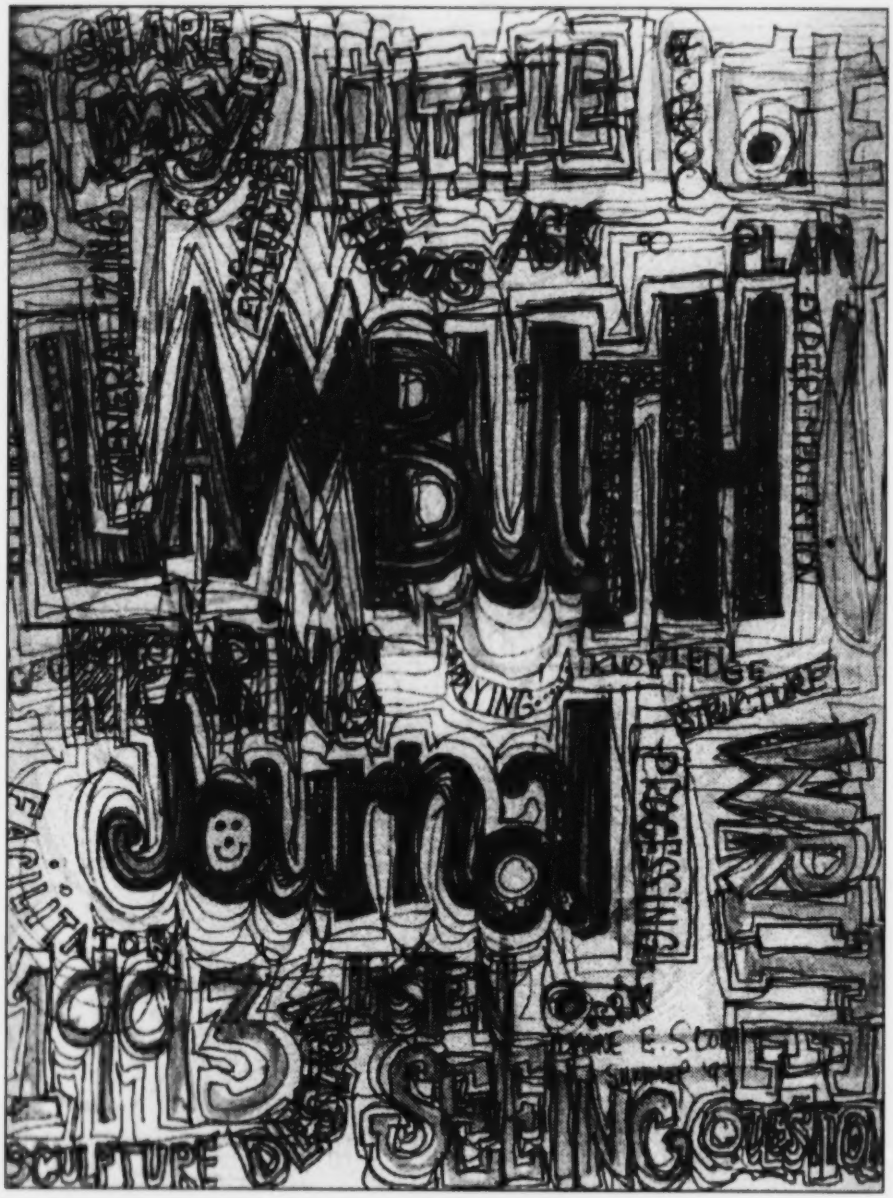

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Dedication

This issue is dedicated to the memory of Martha Brown, ABE supervisor in Hickman County and member of the East Tennessee Literacy Trainers Institute, who died in November, 1993.

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Prologue

Notes of a Staff Development Team Member

Tuesday afternoon. We arrived a little later than we meant to. Three or four people were already in the room. People seemed a little stiff and nervous and didn't have much to say to us. We discovered the light in the room was really dim and there was not much wall space. By the time we unpacked not only had most of the participants arrived, but their bosses from Nashville were there, too. So we took a deep breath and began.

Wednesday morning. We got through yesterday o.k. Our introduction was a little bumpy and a few people seemed a little skeptical. But they were tired from the drive and nobody said much. This morning was entirely different. First of all were the complaints. Someone had trouble with their room. Somebody else hadn't gotten a meal ticket. There were complaints about the schedule—too many night sessions. We facilitators felt a little defensive, but we said we'd check into everything. The group seemed to be waiting—we weren't sure for what. But we went ahead with an activity which led people to talking about their programs. Wow!! You would have thought that they had never had the opportunity before. Our carefully planned schedule had to be changed, but it was worth it. Once people had the opportunity to share their own experiences and learn from others the whole atmosphere changed. Now it was *their* training.

Wednesday night. Well it is their training, and people are certainly engaged. But how? Some people are so quiet it is difficult to tell what they think. Some are bubbling with enthusiasm. And some seem stuck on talking about everything that is wrong—with their supervisors, their programs, and especially their students. So we've reached a point where the training process feels really participatory, but it surely doesn't feel comfortable. I'm exhausted!

Thursday afternoon. After a long day we took a block of time off this afternoon. I thought I was tired yesterday! But today feels really good. Sue, who has been very quiet, almost withdrawn, is a powerful actress. She played a frightened student in a skit and not only did she do a wonderful job acting, she was able to help other participants feel students' fears. The conversation about students' participation changed after the skit. Even some of those who had been really down on their students seemed able to reflect on the reasons participation is not always what we wish, and even that our attitudes and actions as teachers may have an impact on why a student makes the effort to come or not.

Then there was Lois. She was one of the few people in the group I had a negative feeling about. She seemed domineering to me, always has an answer, and whatever isn't going well is somebody else's fault. She never seemed to reflect on her own attitude and practice. Well this morning we did a writing activity, and she was in the group which drew their life stories. Her story was quite powerful—she grew up in a very hard situation and has struggled all her life to get where she is today. In a lot of ways she feels really insecure about herself. When she told her story I was able to understand and appreciate her a lot more (and learn once again not to be so quick to judge). And as she told her story, Lois seemed to be realizing that the right choice is not always obvious and that other people had helped her even as she helped herself. I think this realization may affect how she thinks about her students.

Friday night. Everyone has left. The team members say we should really debrief now while we still remember everything, but we are too tired. We pack up everything and drive home remembering:

- how Sue kept right on contributing after her acting "debut"
- how Lois made sure everyone in her team took part in their presentation
- how dumb we felt when we forgot the agenda handouts and then how the agenda changed anyway
- how...

1

An Introduction to Participatory Staff Development

Staff development. Inservice. Tutor training. These are ways we describe educational experiences designed for teachers. Just as we know that students in adult basic education classes are more involved in learning when they have a say in what and how they will learn, we believe that teachers and tutors are more likely to learn and apply what they have learned to change their classroom practice when they are involved in determining what and how they will learn.

This issue of *Seeds of Innovation* focuses on the teacher as learner, on creating successful supportive learning environments for professional growth and development. It draws from experiences of Tennessee ABE practitioners who participated in the 1993-94 Literacy Trainers Institutes and the 1994-95 Learner at the Center Institutes conducted by the Center for Literacy Studies, as well as from the work of the Tennessee Ad Hoc Staff Development Committee in 1992-93. In the Institute sessions, teachers and administrators were involved in designing and implementing meaningful staff development experiences for other teachers and designing and implementing learner-centered approaches in their home programs.

In each Institute a group of twenty to thirty ABE and literacy teachers and administrators spent an intense week together participating in learning activities. They returned to their local programs and put into practice what they had

learned by developing and carrying out projects in their classes or programs. They came back together after several months to share what they had learned. A more complete description of the Institutes and the Committee is found in Appendix 1.

Participatory staff development and learner-centered education have links. Both start with the experience of the learner, whether ABE teacher or adult student, and grow from there. As Todd Evans points out in his reflection, we often find it easier to take a learner-centered approach with adult students than with ourselves as teachers and tutors. In the participatory staff development institutes and the learner-centered education institutes, the practitioner was at the center of the learning experience. The main processes framing the design of these institutes were:

- Experience it (as a learner)
- Try it out (as a facilitator)
- Reflect on it (individually and as a group member)
- Draw in new knowledge from peers and outside sources
- Try it again

Reflections

I have come to realize that one of the most beneficial aspects of the Institute was that the workshop sessions followed a learner-centered participatory approach. Although everything I read was useful, informative, and provided a comprehensive picture of learner-centered participatory education, it was the workshop sessions themselves that provide me with a reference point. Without a life experience to draw upon, it is often difficult to apply a set of philosophies to a practical situation. I have not only thought about learner-centered participatory education, I have experienced it and I have a better understanding because of that. Because I learned something in a learner-centered participatory environment and I think I learned it well, I also have confidence in the process.

We have been stressing to our volunteer tutors the need to take a learner-centered participatory approach when working with an adult. However, it has now become apparent that we are missing a key ingredient in our training process; we have not let them experience it. My project is to reorganize training so that it will be conducted in a learner-centered participatory environment, provide a model for tutoring sessions, and make them confident in the tutoring process.

— Todd Evans
Learner at the Center

This issue of *Seeds* is not a how-to-do-it book on staff development, nor is it a report on these institutes and workshops. Rather, it is a collection of ideas, activities and reflections drawn from a variety of sources which we hope will be used to stimulate and supplement our staff development activities. It is written for teachers and administrators in literacy, adult basic education and employment training programs who are interested in creating meaningful learning opportunities for themselves. It has been a difficult issue of *Seeds* to put together. We have struggled with how to put on paper a process which is so dependent on the continuous flow of ideas and exchange among participants. We can begin with this volume in print, but participatory staff development is best understood in practice.

At the Center for Literacy Studies, our definition of literacy is shaped by Paulo Freire's insistence that literacy is the reading of the world, not just the word, just as our actions are guided by Myles Horton's (and others') insistence that learning starts where people are, not where we think they should be. We define literacy as the reading, writing, speaking, listening, and critical thinking skills and practices essential for full participation in our democratic society. We link the skill and practice of reading and writing (reading the word) and the speaking, listening and critical thinking skills and practices (reading the world) with the action of full participation in a democratic society.

Our approach to staff development is drawn from this philosophy, from experience, and from research on how people learn. As adults, we have had a wide range of experiences in our work as educators and in the rest of our lives. These life experiences form the basis for what we believe. Sometimes we are conscious of this, sometimes not. We learn from experiences by reflecting on them: Why did I do that? Why might that person have responded that way? How might I approach this differently? Our own learning as Center staff and the staff development we do with others includes opportunities for reflection, both individually and in groups. We learn also from each others' ideas. New knowledge is brought into our learning process from other people's experiences and from reading, presentations, exchange visits, and so on.

Chapter 1
is an introduction to participatory staff development.

Chapter 2
covers planning staff development events, taking into account participants' needs and developing a vision of what we want our work to be.

Chapter 3
describes designing an event, putting together the agenda of what will happen, and dealing with logistics.

Chapter 4
deals with facilitation skills and challenges.

Chapter 5
discusses evaluation.

But if our goal is to change how we teach and how we work with adult learners, it is not enough simply to experience, reflect, and develop new ideas. Change occurs when our practice changes. It is when we bring new ideas and insights back to the classroom and change what we do that we see learning demonstrated. This new practice becomes experience, which we continue to reflect on with colleagues, in support groups, and with our students.

As we think as a staff about how we formed our ideas about effective staff development, it is hard to separate the philosophies and practices we brought with us to the Center from what we have learned from practitioners across the state. Since its inception in 1988 the Center has been involved in staff development. In 1992, the Tennessee Department of Education, Division of Adult and Community Education convened a Long-Range Staff Development Planning Committee which we facilitated, to examine current staff development practices and to envision

To All My New Friends

There was a woman named
Hanna
Who made us do things we
didn't wanna,
Like writin' in a dialog journal
each day
And many of us had nothing
to say.
To begin the thoughts to get
a-flowing
Stem sentences were given to
get us a-going.
Then came the time to begin
to think
And some replies drove a few
to the brink
Of wanting to get up and run
But before long it was all done.

Now into small groups we went
And the ears of new friends
we bent
Telling the stories of what
we knew
And writing it down for all
to view
Back together to bore the rest
And of course each had the
best.
Look at all the writing we
have done
And only the first day had
just begun.
Now to get started on
something new
And off we go like we knew
what to do.

We talk about places and
people too
And the many different
programs we do.
We try to remember a new
name
And each others' claim to fame.
The friendships formed and
bonds were made
And all too soon time begins
to fade.
With projects completed and
readings done
Each one will remember some
special fun.

— Hazel Finnell
Learner at the Center

Reflections

I have worked at the Center for nearly six years. I came with a long history in education as a teacher in pre-school, elementary school, special education, and community college. I had been a tutor and administrator in adult literacy programs, and had done a lot of informal work in adult education. I had been both a teacher and a trainer of teachers. But I had never really thought through what it is that helped me or other teachers learn and change. I suppose I thought that what teachers need in order to change and strengthen their work is the chance to learn the right information. And I thought that the information I needed was out there somewhere if only I could find it. I only needed to read or be told and then go and do likewise.

But as I said I had not really thought about it a lot. I did know that I had never really found what I needed to feel I was doing a good job as an elementary resource teacher. And I had found that I could present (tell) my staff of literacy teachers my ideas, but that didn't mean their classroom practice looked like I wanted. I had learned and experienced enough to know that the answers weren't easy. And I had begun to read about something called "participatory approaches". I was ready to put some things together.

When I think about how I learn, grow, and change, I identify several things which are important. I need to try new things and to have people believe that I can. I need the opportunity to reflect on what I am doing, to look back at what worked and what didn't and consider why. I seem to do this best by thinking with other people. I do get excited by new ideas and information. I have learned the hard way of the importance of thinking through what I intend to do, of planning carefully.

Many of the things I see in my own learning I have also seen in the teachers who have taken part in Center activities. From our first workshop on group literacy instruction, I have been impressed by the richness and importance of the discussion that occurs when teachers have the opportunity to share their work experiences with each other. I have seen people willing to try new methods when they have had the opportunity to experience them themselves. I have learned the importance of providing a variety of activities for the variety of participants who attend a workshop. I have learned that it is critical to listen and listen again—so that what you are planning is what people want and that you are open to changes that need to be made as you go along.

— Beth Bingman
CLS Staff

Putting the Teacher at the Center of Staff Development

In this excerpt Hanna Fingeret writes about the importance of valuing the learning of teachers.

A few years ago I had the opportunity to work with Suzanne Cockley on a very exciting project—evaluating ABE staff development in the Commonwealth of Virginia. We were supposed to evaluate the effectiveness of the staff development structures already in place in Virginia, including a newsletter, a statewide conference for ABE instructors and administrators as well as a conference for those involved in ESL, local "cluster" training workshops that responded to local requests for assistance, and a network of regional specialists.

One of our first data collection activities was to attend the statewide ABE conference and to interview many of the participants. We talked with individuals as well as with groups, and we asked them for their assessment of that particular conference as well as for their experience with staff development in general. We probed for insights into the relationship between participation in organized staff development activities and changes in practice with their students or, in the case of administrators, with their staff.

After a while Sue and I began to see that we were asking the wrong questions—or coming at the questions from the wrong direction. The participants in our research taught us consistently that any staff development activity has the potential to be useful or not. Some activities are organized in ways that make it easier for them to be useful, but the point was that the usefulness was not inherent in the activity—it had to do with how the practitioner used the activity. The practitioner is the agent of learning. Any activity will be useful only to the extent that the practitioner is open to learning and the activity is relevant.

In retrospect, this seems common sense; it extends the philosophy of learner-centered participatory instruction from its application to literacy students to applications for literacy practitioners. When Sue and I turned to the staff development literature, we found guidance from the work done in inquiry-based development and practitioner research, particularly Susan Lytle's work at the University of Pennsylvania.

We saw that when practitioners approach their work with an inquiry stance—they are asking questions about what's happening and how it's happening and how they can influence it—they use resources in their environment to help pursue their questions.

In this way, statewide conferences, local staff development workshops, teacher inquiry communities, professional reading groups, newsletters and other mechanisms become "effective" because they provide resources that help practitioners pursue their own learning.

This way of understanding staff development places the teacher rather than the content at the center; it moves away from viewing staff development as a series of workshops to seeing it as an ongoing process that

(Continued on next page)

a comprehensive system for Tennessee adult education teachers. During an intense (yet rewarding) retreat and follow-up meetings, the committee created the Long Range Staff Development Plan, which was adopted in 1993. (See Appendix 1 for more information.)

As the committee grappled with ways to provide more effective staff development opportunities, they developed some learning principles, which have been incorporated into the Characteristics of Effective Staff Development framing this publication. An atmosphere for learning, they said, should give support and encouragement, not ridicule; should be a safe space, where one can take risks, make mistakes, and learn from them; provide opportunities to develop partnerships with other teachers; provide opportunities to practice; be relevant and connected; and recognize people's different ways of learning.

The Committee looked for alternatives to the traditional three-hour Saturday morning mandatory inservice. Among the alternative approaches they suggested were:

- Mentoring – teaming a teacher with experience in a particular area with one who is learning.
- Focus Groups – providing participants the opportunity to examine an issue closely and learn from their experiences.
- Action Research – a longer-term process of focusing on a particular issue, learning from other's work, then developing and testing strategies to address the issue.

(Continued from page 8)

is directed by the practitioner. It respects practitioners' prior experience and learning, and values practitioners' insights, questions and aspirations.

Those of us who are responsible for facilitating staff development have to help practitioners get clear about their questions and develop a plan for pursuing them. We have to help practitioners develop inquiry communities in which they can support each other's continuing learning and growth. And we have to provide mechanisms for dissemination of practitioners' learning so that teachers and administrators become resources for each other (and for academic researchers) on a much broader scale. Thus we contribute to the overall continuing growth and development of the field.

Hanna Fingeret, "Director's Column," *Vision*, v. 6, no. 2, Winter, 1994. Literacy South, Durham, N.C. Reprinted with permission.

- Teacher and Administrator Exchanges – providing staff opportunities to learn from each other and the rich variety of programs in Tennessee.
- Teacher Support Groups – giving teachers the opportunity to try new approaches with structured support and feedback form their peers.
- Study Circles – composed of teachers or administrators who come together to learn by reading and discussing how what they read applies to their work.

From readings and discussions during the Institutes and from the Staff Development Committee planning process, participants have clarified the qualities and characteristics of effective, participatory staff development.

- Staff development is a continuous, on-going process which happens over time.

- From beginning to end, staff development draws on participants' experiences; it is "bottom-up," not "top-down." Participants are active in the planning process.

Getting Started

The question that is always asked is, "What do I do the first night of class?" Overcoming the anxiety and nervousness for both the teacher and learner is the key to getting off to a good start. To help eliminate these forms of fear and stress we ask our experienced teachers to share with our new teachers a successful activity that they do the first night in their Adult Education classes.

The use of a learner-centered approach enabled the facilitator to use direct input from experienced ABE staff. Each of the suggested activities were discussed in detail between the experienced and first-time ABE teachers. Immediately following this broad discussion, a priority of the top six concerns were listed and discussed in further detail.

The facilitator divided these teachers into three groups. Each group consisted of two new teachers and four experienced teachers. The three groups were given these six top choices to evaluate, re-prioritize, combine or eliminate. In order for educational experiences to produce a cumulative effect, they must be organized so as to reinforce each other. First night activities should provide experiences that will eliminate notions of inadequacies that both the teacher and learner may bring to class the first session.

— Frank Brinkley
Learner at the Center

- Whatever the form it takes, staff development depends on thorough planning and "preparing the ground," getting participants ready for the experience.

- It is set in the context of participants' experiences and program needs

- Participatory staff development is visionary yet practical. It keeps in mind the "Big Picture" of what we are trying to accomplish with adult education.

- It recognizes the roles of reflection, analysis and questioning; experimentation and practice; and the introduction of new knowledge.

- Good staff development takes many forms. It uses a variety of activities and formats to involve participants in their own learning.

- Effective staff development has clear facilitation, with shared responsibility and accountability among facilitators and participants for the outcomes of the experience.

- Participatory staff development combines structure with freedom and flexibility. The role of the facilitator is to encourage and guide, not control, the process.

- It sets an atmosphere which respects the dignity and diversity of all involved. It breaks isolation and builds a community of learners, a safe place to learn.

- Effective staff development expands the knowledge base and standards of the field. Together participants create new knowledge, which can raise the quality of services offered to students. Participants grow professionally and personally.

In the following chapters we draw on the experiences of many Tennessee practitioners as well as our own work. Chapter 2 covers planning staff development, taking into account participants' needs, developing a vision of what we

What Does Staff Development Look Like?

The following excerpt from Massachusetts adult educators gives us ideas about the many forms of effective staff development:

It is easy to think of staff development as workshops or conferences. However, staff development encompasses a wide range of other activities, many of which can happen right within the ABE program or classroom. Here are some suggestions:

Peer observation: Get together with another teacher or two and visit each other's classrooms to get new ideas or feedback on teaching. Decide beforehand what and how you will observe.

Team teaching: Pair up with another teacher and "merge" your classes one or more times to teach new or broader units.

Study circle: Hook up with as many as five other practitioners (either inside or outside of your program) to meet together periodically to read about and discuss an issue or approach in ABE. (See "Getting Together for Staff Development," on page 14 for more ideas about how to organize small group staff development.)

Individual study or classroom inquiry: Set up for yourself a systematic way of learning more about a topic or question. Think of a question you have (e.g., "What happens when students teach each other in small groups?") and then collect information from books or articles and also from your own experiences to help you answer your question....

Exchanging classes: If you teach a beginning-level class, think about swapping classes once or twice during the year with another teacher who teaches a more advanced level. Then you'll both get a better idea of what comes "before" or "after" for your students.

Staff meeting sharing time: Set aside a time and format in each staff meeting for program staff to share their expertise or to report back and share ideas from staff development activities they have attended outside the program.

Visiting other programs: Arrange to observe activities (teaching, counseling, assessment) in another ABE program. Be sure to schedule in time to meet with teachers and other staff in the program, and invite them to come to your program in return.

A "Good Ideas" notebook: Establish a notebook or box file into which staff can put a one-page write up of a teaching or counseling approach that worked particularly well. Develop a simple, one-page format for contributing ideas so that practitioners know where to start, including what the idea is, why it was tried, why the practitioner thinks it worked, why the practitioner wants to share it, and materials used.

Bright Ideas, by and for the Massachusetts Adult Education Community, v. 4, no. 3, Winter 1994. Reprinted with permission.

want our work to be, and clarifying our theories and models of education and staff development. Chapter 3 describes the process of designing an event—putting together the agenda of what will happen, selecting activities, and taking care of logistics. Chapter 4 deals with facilitation skills and challenges. Chapter 5 discusses evaluation, and the Appendices provide additional resources. The text is illustrated and enriched by contributions from several sources presented in the following format:

- *Pen and ink symbols* denote reflections by Institute participants and by Center staff.
- *Boxes with double lines* contain activities developed by Institute participants and by Center staff.
- *Boxes with a single line* contain writings from other sources (excerpts from articles or books used as readings in Institutes).

Professional Development or Remediation

Susan Lytle and Peggy McGuire question the deficit model of staff development

Professional development continues to be a highly problematic aspect of our work. We affirm its necessity, but we find little agreement about what it should look like. In fact, we have only just begun to define the characteristics of this workforce that we seek to "develop." It does seem clear that we continue to labor under the deficit model of education when considering staff development; in other words, adult education practitioners, like their students, are assumed to come to their work as empty vessels to be filled by outside knowledge and expertise. After sufficient training (e.g., courses, workshops, and seminars), they will be credentialed and therefore adequate to their tasks in the classroom.

As with similar assumptions about the adult learners with whom we work, the deficit model ignores the rich and varied experience that practitioners bring with them. It also suggests that practitioners are not capable of deciding what they need in order to improve their own work or of directing their own professional development. Furthermore, by isolating individual practitioners to remediate their inadequacies, traditional notions of staff development bypass the crucial connection between individual professional development and overall improvement of the organizations in which they work.

Susan L. Lytle and Peggy McGuire, "Staff Development at the Crossroads," *NCAL Connections*, April, 1993. National Center on Adult Literacy, Philadelphia, PA. Reprinted with permission.

Getting Together for Staff Development

Another excerpt from Massachusetts adult educators adds to the many forms of effective staff development:

Here are seven different ways to work in a group around staff development. This is not an exhaustive list but just a few ideas to get you going.

Book Club: Practitioners come together for the purpose of analyzing a book or article about a common topic. This could be an ongoing group or a single meeting. People can also form groups around content areas such as assessment, multi-level classes, multiculturalism, native language literacy, etc.

Materials Group: Practitioners come together to evaluate existing classroom materials. Materials are identified and gathered before the session and participants in the group look at the materials with specific questions such as: Who are these materials for? What skills and knowledge do they include? How can I use/adapt these materials to fit the needs of different students?

Peer Observation Group: A small group of teachers within a program observe each others' classes and meet to share and discuss techniques used in the classroom to address areas of common concern.

Teacher Inquiry Group: Teachers develop questions that they are interested in investigating inside or outside of the classroom. Teachers spend time researching the questions posed and meet to discuss the findings.

Theater Group *(modeled after the New England Literacy Theater):* Students and staff can work together to develop role plays to perform for students and staff around issues facing adult learners. Feedback sessions at the end of the role plays are intended to get audience participation and stimulate discussion.

Publishing Group: Teachers identify a common interest or area of research. Collectively, they decide on the topic, audience, and publication to write for and then write together or individually using the group for editing and feedback.

Field Trip Group: Staff members identify a need in their program (like materials for a multi-level class) and investigate other programs that are working in this area. They arrange for a program visit/observation when staff from both programs meet to discuss strategies and materials used to address this need.

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Kamla Bhasin, Participatory Development Demands Participatory Training

This article was written for trainers working in development projects, but the ideas excerpted here are relevant to staff development for adult education and literacy teachers as well. (Eds.)

If Top-down Development is Out, Then Top-down Training is Also Out

Traditionally, training is considered to be a transfer of selected technical skills and knowledge by one set of people to another. The content, methodology and setting of such training is usually all determined by the trainers. In such training programs the trainees are merely passive recipients of whatever the trainers decide to give them. They are the objects of training and not its subjects. They seldom participate in organizing their own learning.... Such training is fundamentally undemocratic, hierarchical and non-participatory. The trainers provide the directives, determine the contents and the methods and watch for the response—the results of the experiment they have conducted.

This kind of top-down training was suitable to prepare people to implement the top-down development. After going through such training, trainees would be expected to adopt similar attitudes in their own work. They would assume the role of trainers vis-à-vis the people and work in an authoritarian and undemocratic way. It is obvious that such training which was effective earlier, is totally unacceptable to prepare people for human resource development and sustainable development.

Participatory Development Requires Participatory Training

Training, we believe, is a continuous and ongoing process.... What we mean by training is a process of questioning, of discovering knowledge for oneself, of acquiring social and human skills, values and behavior patterns which are necessary for initiating participatory development. In addition to having relevant content, such training programs need a suitable methodology. In fact, the methodology becomes very crucial in training.

The way training is organized should reflect the value which the training talks about in theory. For example, the training itself should be participatory, democratic and non-hierarchical if these are the values it would like the participants to imbibe. The participants should be involved in decision-making about most, if not all, aspects of the training program. In other words, it should give participants the experience of participation, collective learning and decision-making.

To train sensitive activists we need a methodology which is participatory and non-hierarchical, which makes people feel good about themselves, which builds their confidence and self-respect to unleash their creativity, which makes them feel energetic and joyous—simply put, a methodology which empowers. Besides everything else, the training must provide to the participants some clarity on our vision of sustainable development, vision of the society we want to create, some understanding of our common goals.

Activists should be trained through a process of group interaction. Such a process can facilitate the acquiring of attitudes, knowledge and the skills for activists to fulfil their role.

(Continued on next page)

(Continued from page 15)

Training should create an atmosphere where the participants discover knowledge for themselves in a dialogical group situation where everyone (both trainers and trainees) participates with a questioning and open mind.

Training should not only help in the search and acquisition of new skills and knowledge, but also help the participants to acquire and strengthen values like justice, equality, honesty, truthfulness, and solidarity amongst oppressed groups. It should also create or release energy in the participants to act with conviction and courage in their various struggles at different levels.

Training should affirm the participants. It should increase their self-confidence and self-respect. It should also create friendship, trust and solidarity amongst participants.

Training should help participants develop an analytical and questioning mind and a scientific approach to understand the realities around them.

The discussions and analysis should be based on the reality as experienced by the participants in their life and work. They should begin with the known and then go on to the unknown rather than the other way around.

In fact, the issues to be discussed should be determined in consultation with the participants according to their needs and expectations. A good way of achieving this is to ask the participants to present case studies of their work experience. From these presentations it may be gauged what their priorities are for training.

All sensitive training, in other words, should liberate the participants from the burden of ready-made answers which are given by the dominant cultural and political structures. Training should encourage participants to investigate the nature of reality form their own angle, encourage them to see for themselves whether what they are being told by others is consistent with reality.

Training should also start a process of questioning and challenging authority and domination. This can be done by creating an atmosphere for everyone to open up, to ask questions, to criticize, to feel the need for constant vigilance.

Besides everything else, training should be fun and joyful. We must do away with the often seen and heard dichotomy between joy and work, entertainment and serious employment. Surely work can be fun and a serious job entertaining. One can (and we do) sing songs and see films which relate to the issues under discussion. Training should bring out the best in every individual.

Each training program should be an exploration. Even if the objective of a program is to provide technical skills, it can be done in a participatory way. Even in technical training it should not be necessary to predetermine which skills are to be imparted and how. The group can first discuss the tasks the participants have to perform, and then decide which skills they require for fulfilling these tasks and how they want to learn them. When done in this way, the whole training program can become an interesting and participatory exercise.

Kamla Bhasin, "Let Us Look Again at Development, Education and Women" *Convergence*, v. XXVII, no. 4, 1994, pp. 5-14. Reprinted with permission.

2

Getting Ready to Help Others Learn: Looking at the Big Picture of Staff Development

- ***Staff development is a continuous, on-going process which happens over time.***

- ***From beginning to end, staff development draws on participants' experiences; it is "bottom-up," not "top-down." Participants are active in the planning process.***

- ***Whatever the form it takes, staff development is dependent on thorough planning and "preparing the ground," getting participants ready for the experience.***

- ***It is set in the context of participants' experiences and program needs, yet it keeps the "big picture" in mind. It is visionary yet practical.***

This chapter focuses on the work needed before a staff development process is put into place. Planning sets the "big picture" for our work as facilitators of staff development—developing a vision of where we are going; defining our values and goals and being clear about our educational models; understanding our participants' needs, past experiences, and hopes for the future. Knowing the needs and experiences of the group is crucial. Equally important is the reflection we do as facilitators about our own educational philosophy.

Reflections

Picture this: a large table, covered with yellow legal pads, application forms, articles, coffee cups, flip chart pages. Four women leaning over the cluttered table, in intense conversation, the exchange of ideas spread evenly among the four. One makes a suggestion, another says, "Fine, and then we could ...." Another says, "But look at it this way, maybe this would work better." The first says, "I hadn't thought of it that way." The fourth gets right to the heart of the issue with an observation. Then connection! We all agree, let's try this approach.

What's going on? A CLS planning team meeting, and I'm doing what I enjoy, working with a team of peers to put together a gathering which will allow participants to engage fully in personal and professional growth. Sure, sometimes our work is not so smooth and quickly productive—sometimes it takes a couple of "visits" to a needs assessment discussion or a logistics issue to get to group agreement. But more often than not, planning team work (sometimes two, three or more of us) is rewarding and fun, something we look forward to and wish we could do more.

What contributes to this positive feeling? I think it is being in an atmosphere where each team member's experiences and ideas are truly valued and listened to, where we feel free to reflect and share thoughts without competing with each other. Free to disagree without fear of "put down" or isolation. Free to explore a train of thought out loud, without being sure of where it's leading.

When I first came to work at the Center I brought a new set of experiences in planning and facilitating training for trainers. One of my first responsibilities was to plan the Literacy Trainers Institutes with three people who had been working together for several years. We met together in long sessions, examining our assumptions about "training," looking at various models, trying new ideas on for size—learning about each other's approaches. We joked that I brought a three-ring circus approach to planning a staff development event—meaning that I would put three activities in a spot where one might do, or give options and open-ended assignments. Others were known for quiet reflection, intense questioning, attention to detail. Figuring it all out together, laughing, joking, analyzing, agonizing, procrastinating, pushing, disagreeing, trying something new—all of this contributed to our own personal and collective development. We were (and still are) truly engaged in a learning process—the kind of experience we hope would happen with any group of practitioners who value what they do and want to do it better and more effectively.

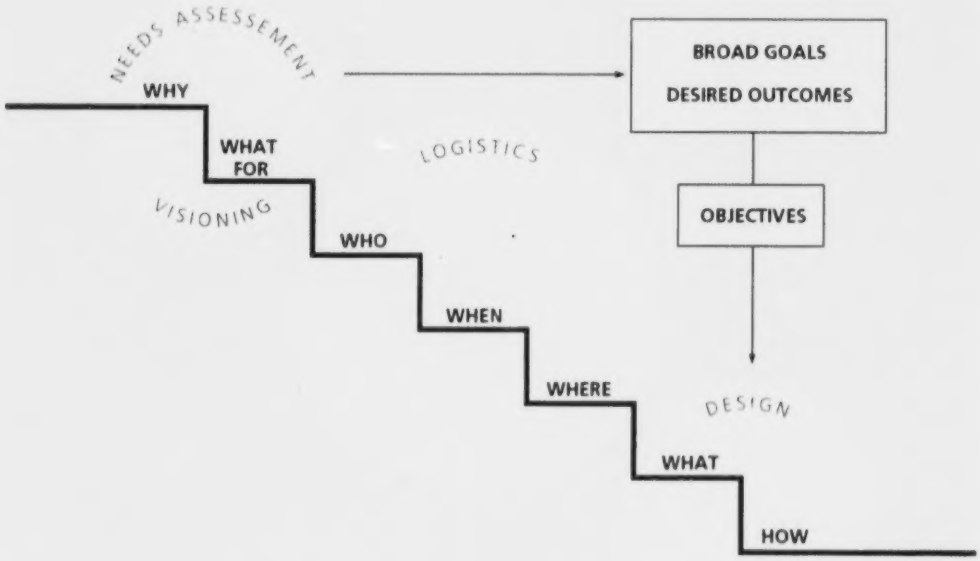
— Brenda Bell
CLS Staff

Whether planning a day-long workshop on a specific topic or a year-long action research project with co-workers, time spent on articulating the vision and discussing the educational models we bring to the experience is time well spent.

Jane Vella, experienced adult educator in many cultural contexts and director of the Jubilee Popular Education Center in North Carolina, writing in *Learning to Teach* (see Appendix 3), suggests seven steps of planning: Who are the participants? Why are they gathering? When? Where will this take place? What for? (What is the big picture, the vision?) What concepts, principles and topics will be covered? How?

In our discussions during the Literacy Trainers Institutes, we looked at Jane's steps as parts of the process of planning and designing the actual flow of the staff development session discussed in the next chapter. We adapted her steps to fit our conception of planning and designing *(Figure 1)*. The next sections of this chapter discuss assessing needs and

Figure 1



developing a vision, which are part of figuring out "why" and "what for," and getting clear about our educational models, which helps us think about "how."

Assessing Needs

Beginning with *why* and *what for* centers our thinking on the big picture of adult basic education, the needs of programs and of individual teachers. How do we know what practitioners need and want in order to advance their own learning and improve program practice? How do we know the needs of programs and state systems? Contrary to stan-

Reflections

When I planned my project, I hoped to be able to implement "my assignment" into a tutor training workshop that had already been planned. Because of my heavy schedule, I felt this would be less time-consuming than trying to plan a project from the ground floor. Little did I know how much I, my trainers, and tutor trainees would enjoy, let alone learn from this new workshop format.

I used the format from a basic Laubach tutor training workshop. I eliminated many of the presentations that were vague, boring and could not be used in the beginning stages of tutoring. These presentations were nothing more than lecture teaching with little or no participation from the trainees. I added learner-centered activities that included dialogue journals, clustering activities, and Language Experience Approach, and several get-acquainted activities that initiated an ongoing bonding within the group.

I expected a positive reaction from the trainees because many of our past evaluations indicated more interest in the hands-on activities. What came as a real surprise to me was the enjoyment that I and the other trainees experienced in our role. Allowing the learner to be at the center of the learning process made our role less tiring and more informed on what our trainees feel they need to learn in order to become more efficient tutors.

I have seen an immediate change in the way our new tutors approach their students—with more enthusiasm, self-confidence and an almost unknowing attitude of involving "their learner" in the learning process. They are facilitating by allowing their students to learn, rather than teaching by controlling their students.

If anything was hard about this project, it was taking the time to change old mindsets and schedules. Any time taken to make these changes is well worth the benefits we, as trainers, are reaping. We now look forward to our next workshop instead of dreading to spend twelve hours in a boring workshop.

— Sharron Bessent
Learner at the Center

dard practice, the ubiquitous survey form is not the only way to know the needs of participants. Asking is one prong of a three-sided approach to needs assessment: Ask, observe, study.

Individually-identified needs are often different from group-identified needs. Asking a group of practitioners what we need to learn or do better as a *group* or as a program of ABE teachers, JOBS teachers, or ESL teachers, helps us develop a common vision, strengthens our relationships to each other and builds our sense of community, as well as developing our sense of responsibility to our programs. Staff development becomes a shared responsibility, not something to do just to please our director.

Facilitating a discussion about group needs assessment is part of the responsibility of a planning team, and it draws on the same skills as facilitating a learning event itself. *(See Chapter 4.)* While it is not always possible to convene a group when planning a district or state-wide staff development project, it is often possible to build a discussion into a district meeting. As more and more practitioners become linked through on-line computer communications, real-time discussions are another option for group discussion of staff development needs.

We have many opportunities to observe and study the needs of practitioners and programs. Planning teams can informally observe programs in action, noting the learning climate, interactions among students and teachers, and teachers' satisfaction. They can study trends in state demographics, program funding and allocation of resources, program records for recruitment and retention, and reports and analyses from the general adult education literature. The triangle chart *(Figure 2)* lists the brainstorming efforts of one Literacy Trainers Institute session.

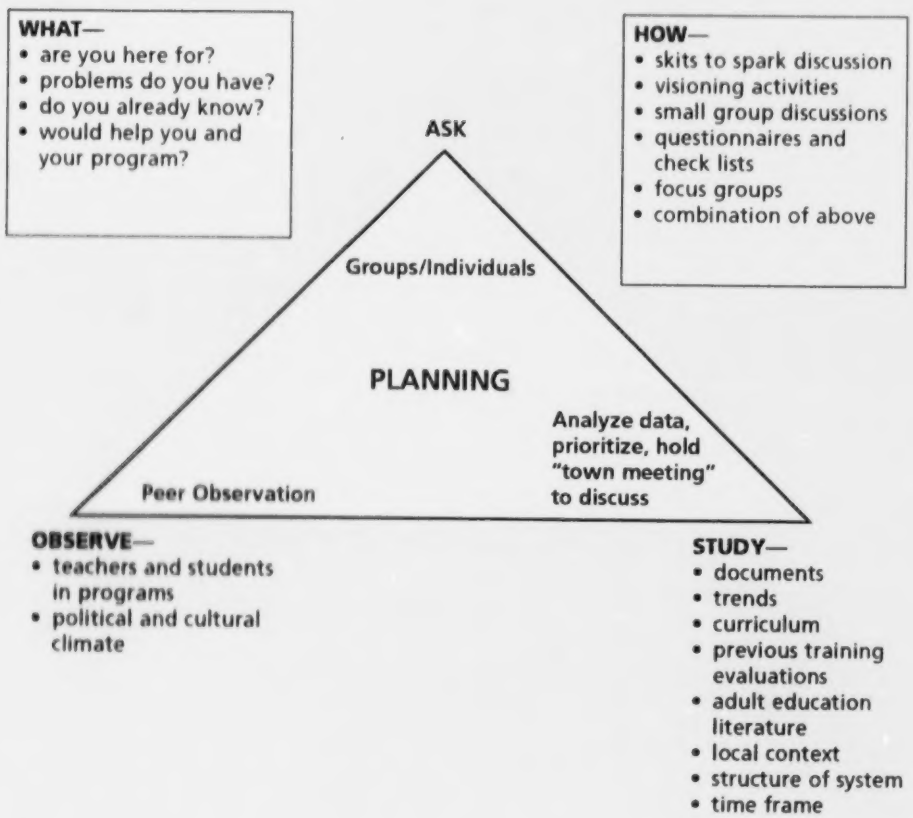
When the Center staff began planning both the Literacy Trainers Institutes and the Learner at the Center Institute, we drew from all three prongs of the triangle. We had a wealth of observations and study, from our work with the Ad Hoc Staff Development Committee, from our own assessments, and from "taking the pulse" of the ABE field. We asked Tennessee ABE supervisors and literacy coordinators to prioritize their needs and to let us know their preferences for

the type and length of staff development opportunities. We held focus groups in the three main regions of the state to gather input into our work as the Tennessee Literacy Resource Center, and these discussions informed our planning of the Institutes.

Not all needs assessment is necessarily conducted before the beginning of a staff development event. Flexible trainers, ready to respond to the concerns which participants bring to a workshop, study circle, or other event, may begin with an activity which uncovers participants' experiences, priorities and immediate needs.

This kind of on-the-spot assessment often gives a truer picture of the participants, and can serve as a warm-up, get-

Figure 2



acquainted activity as well. The M&Ms needs assessment activity is designed to do both with a group which has come together for the first time.

Developing a Vision

As we plan staff development, we take into account both the vision of the participants and our own vision as facilitators and planners. We consider our own vision of what programs could be like, but are influenced by a larger vision of what we are trying to accomplish with our work. We look at people with "two eyes": one for where they are, and the other for where they might go.

So, in planning we begin with needs identified by the participants, but we work from our own ideas of where we hope our work will lead. As we move on to designing a process or event we include opportunities for participants to envision their programs and communities asking, "Where do we want to be going with this work?"

Effective planning for staff development doesn't focus only on our current needs, questions, and concerns. It draws from participants a view of the future and helps define steps toward that future. It enlarges the Big Picture. Peter Senge, who has written widely about learning organizations, describes leaders as "designers, teachers, and stewards." Senge suggests that learning organizations are built around the principle of creative tension, which comes from "seeing clearly where we want to be, our 'vision,' and telling the truth about where we are, our 'current reality.' " (Senge 1990, see Appendix 3). Trainers and facilitators of staff development are leaders, with responsibility to help participants identify the creative tension in their teaching and in their programs.

Models of Staff Development

During the Literacy Trainers Institutes, participants compared several models of educational design and discussed the importance of being clear and up front about our models of education. Getting clear about our philosophies and approaches is part of the work of those responsible for staff development. Our philosophy shapes the work we do later

ACTIVITY

M&Ms: Needs Assessment and Icebreaker Activity

Pass around a bag of M&Ms, asking participants to help themselves but not to eat the candy until you tell them to. Ask participants to tell one thing about themselves for each M&M they took, including why they came to the workshop, what they hope to get out of it, and a pressing concern. Start with one of the facilitators. Someone on the facilitation team should take notes on wants/needs of participants, posted on a flip chart. We use this information to develop "hot topic" cards during the break, for use in a later activity. (For more on hot topic cards, see page 59.)

Materials needed:
- M&Ms or other snacks
- flip chart
- markers

— Developed by West Tennessee Literacy Trainers Institute, Meg Neugent, Stewart Stanfill, Amy Hendrix

Journal

I think my vision of an "ideal" adult education program and ideal community have a lot in common. I see people working both individually and in small groups to accomplish things which are important to them. I see processes or systems of support, ways that people can sort out and get help with the needs in their lives. I see an excitement about sharing and learning new things. I see the teacher as a community member sharing her knowledge and resources, but also her needs and doubts. I see flexibility, respect, spaces for quiet, spaces to come together, excitement about discovery. I see pride in the local and connections with the global. I see hard work and lots of laughter. This vision of a program or community is, I realize, also my vision of teachers learning together.

— Beth Bingman
CLS Staff

ACTIVITY

Visioning Activity for Improving Programs Through Staff Development

Talk about the principle of creative tension, identify examples of creative tension at work and in daily life.

Hand out a drawing of a stretched rubber band, or a continuum, with one end identified as Current Reality and the other as Vision for the Future.

Ask participants to write a description of a desired future for the quality of teaching in their programs. Describe the picture of the future as fully as possible.

Then describe the current reality, as honestly as possible. Identify the parts of the current reality which prevents your vision from being implemented. What cannot be changed by you alone (i.e., no paid planning time, life problems of your students)? Identify one or two parts of the current reality which can be influenced by you as a trainer/leader? How can you use the creative tension around these issues to improve the quality of your program?

Discuss your analysis in a small groups.

Materials needed:

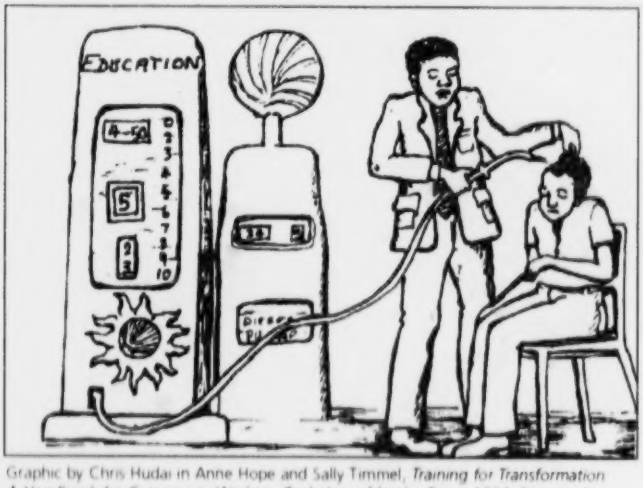
- worksheet/drawing of creative tension

— Developed by CLS Staff
for Literacy Trainers Institutes

when we design or put together the pieces of the educational experience. Institute participants examined the pros and cons for several models and worked on making explicit for ourselves which components of each model were useful. By the end of the Institute, several work groups had adapted the models shown below into models of their own creation.

One of the more familiar models of traditional educational practice is associated with the drawing below, which suggests that someone else has all of the knowledge and skills which can be transferred into your brain, like pumping gas.

This is sometimes called the "expert model" or the "banking model." While it is an approach that most of us don't



Graphic by Chris Hudai in Anne Hope and Sally Timmel, *Training for Transformation A Handbook for Community Workers*, Zimbabwe: Mambo Press, 1994. Reprinted with permission.

find comfortable, we agreed that there are times when we are learning something new that we wish there could be a "direct deposit" or a tank full of gas to get us going.

This model has more sophisticated variations which link the role of the expert with a learning system to help us incorporate the desired behaviors in our lives. In one such model, role models of success are identified (the experts) and researched to identify the components of their success *(Figure 3)*. A learning system is developed to help us incorporate these components into our lives and in our everyday practice, so we can become like the role model.

Another model familiar to adult educators is based on David Kolb's experiential learning cycle *(Figure 4)*, which says that adults move through five distinct phases when learning something new: doing/practicing; talking or writ-

1.
THE EXPERTS
We identify role models of success.
2.
RESEARCH
Researchers discover the key fundamentals essential to your success.
3.
THE LEARNING SYSTEM
A learning system is developed to help you incorporate the fundamentals into your lifestyle.
4.
APPLICATION
We show you how to apply the fundamentals to achieve success.

Figure 3 Adapted from a graphic in Arnold, Rick, et al, *Educating for a Change*, 1991. Reprinted with permission.

ACTIVITY

Visioning Activity for a Workshop on Teaching in the Multi-level Classroom

Objectives: To involve participants in anticipating and identifying potential problems in multi-level classrooms, and to begin examining creative ways to deal with such classes as they experience them. (The two-and-a-half-hour workshop was held before the beginning of classes in a new school year.)

Drawing Activity: Pairs of experienced and new teachers draw a picture of their ideal class on newsprint. Give the pairs "permission" to draw anything they wish—use symbols to express ideas and atmosphere, real objects to represent the lay out and equipment. There is not a right way.

The pairs share their drawings with the group and do a "reality check" of what barriers exist to having that ideal class. Facilitators ask questions to draw out the challenges and barriers; record on flipchart. Lists are used as a basis for small group discussions later in the workshop, on developing strategies for moving toward the ideal multi-level classroom.

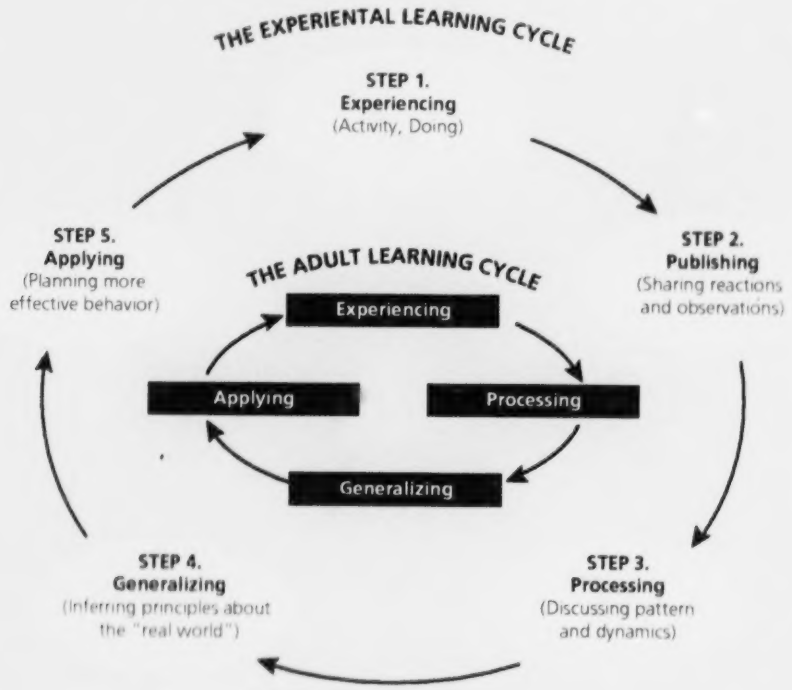
— Developed by Nancy Brewer
Literacy Trainers Institute

ing about observations of what happened; discussing patterns and dynamics; putting these patterns in a larger perspective; and then applying new knowledge in everyday life (doing, practicing again). By designing educational experiences which allow participants to move through all five stages, we provide for the variety of learning styles in our group. Kolb classifies four main learning styles: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation.

The "spiral model" *(Figure 5)* more closely reflects the philosophy of Center staff. Based on our own experiences and those of the staff at the Doris Marshall Institute in Toronto, this model recognizes the importance of past experiences of participants, the need for new information and theory, and action as well as practice.

A different way of looking at models of staff development

Figure 4 Adapted from J. W. Pfeiffer, *Reference Guide to Handbooks and Annuals*, San Diego: University Associates, 1985, p. 4



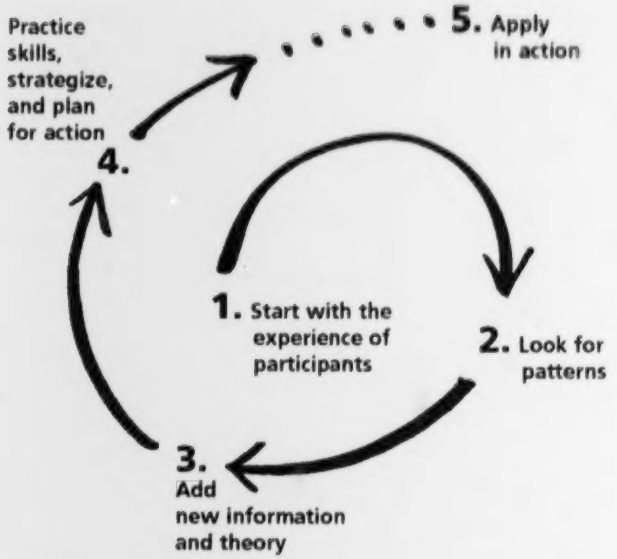

Practice skills, strategize, and plan for action
4.
5. Apply in action
1. Start with the experience of participants
2. Look for patterns
3. Add new information and theory

Figure 5 Arnold, Rick, et al. *Educating for a Change*. Reprinted with permission.

has been developed by Wrigley and Guth in their chapter on staff development in *Bringing Literacy to Life* (see Appendix 3). They group approaches to staff development into three broad categories: the craft model, the applied science model, and the inquiry model. Looking at these models and at our experiences with them further deepened Institute participants' understanding of various approaches to adult learning and hence to staff development.

The "craft model" identifies experienced practitioners to mentor new or less experienced practitioners. These experienced teachers may conduct workshops or act as "master teachers" within a local program or a district. Often, staff development based on this model focuses on the master teacher's particular area of expertise and on the issues of concern to new teachers. Wrigley and Guth suggest that the success of this model depends on the abilities of the master teacher and on the willingness of the new teacher to examine this expert's advice in light of her own experience.

The "applied science model" links theory and practice, connecting relevant research with teaching practice. Put very

Reflections

The Trainers Institute reinforced in me—again—that real learning (the kind that changes you) is a process. Straight information taken in (via books, lectures, video tapes) may be part of a learning experience, but only a part. For real growth, there must be internalizing. Almost as evidence to this, I suddenly realized I'm describing the "Experiential Learning Cycle". It was the experience of the Institute which moved me from academic knowledge of that "model" to a renewed awareness of how true it is. This really hit home after the Institute when I prepared to meet with the rest of my Knox County training team. My first impulse (because I was so excited by then) was to try to pour all my new-found revelations into their heads! Presto! Chango! Instant "participatory trainers!" A little reflection reminded me that—of course—we as a training team would have to live through the process of change, too. My momentary blindness reminded me that my own change was far from complete. I am trying to share, model, introduce more participatory approaches in our staff development, as well as sharing specific articles, the triangle model, and some of the fun activities from the Institute.

— Margaret Lindop
Literacy Trainers Institute

Journal

August 25, 1993

Work done in preparing for my training activity on learning disabilities:

1. Rereading notes, other books and materials.
2. Ordering materials, books and articles dealing with learning disabilities.
3. Organizing information for presentation.
4. Organizing information to mail to other team members.
5. Creating a needs assessment for teachers.
6. Reading needs assessment and talking to teachers for ideas in planning workshop.
7. Organizing a training team from local teachers.
8. Deciding on materials to copy for handouts and visual aids to use in presentation.
9. Determining the program agenda.
10. Condensing materials and information to fit the time allotted.
11. Organizing learning disabilities library and file.
12. Creating a resource list for teachers to use to check out materials on learning disabilities.

The work done after the summer session was both easier and harder. It was easier in the sense that I knew what I wanted to do and had informative materials. The work was harder in that I did not have the team and could not discuss ideas and receive suggestions from team members. I really missed the interaction.

— Janice Upton
Literacy Trainers Institute

briefly, an educational expert or trainer provides conceptual knowledge, then teachers try out this new knowledge in the classroom. Some examples are found in attending conferences and workshops, use of outside experts, teacher training institutes and videos, literacy centers, and setting up local conferences.

The "inquiry model" starts with teacher's own experiences and problems in their teaching practices and gives them the opportunity to explore solutions. Individual teachers may individually reflect on their work through keeping journals, or by developing an individual practitioner inquiry project. A group of practitioners may work collaboratively to analyze a problem, try out new strategies and document their results, through an action research project. *(See* Seeds of Innovation, *v. 1, for a description of a Center for Literacy Studies action research project on learning disabilities.)*

Effective staff developers make sure that participants have opportunities to experience, reflect, and apply what they

ACTIVITY

What Experience Do You Bring?

Post a large, long piece of butcher paper on the wall, divided into months or quarters. As participants arrive for the opening session, ask each to record on the timeline the various professional learning experiences they've had in the past year.

If they have facilitated or led a session, this can be indicated by a star or different color. The list might include workshops, conferences, in-service meetings, credit courses, teleconferences, discussion groups, reading, television programs, etc.

This gives participants a visual reminder of their collective experience and provides a way to talk about varieties of staff development (or lack of).

It also serves as the basis for a concrete discussion of models of adult learning. Which experiences were based on an "expert" model? Were any similar to the "spiral" model? Are there similarities between the adult learning models and the staff development models given by Wrigley and Guth? Do we find craft or applied science models in our staff development as literacy and adult basic education teachers? Why?

Materials needed: butcher paper or flip chart pages, markers, tape.

— Activity developed by CLS Staff for Literacy Trainers Institute

ACTIVITY

Scenario for Staff Development Approaches

To help us explore educational models and to keep our discussion from being too theoretical, we joined forces with the New England Adult Education Social Action Theater during the first few days of one Literacy Trainers Institute. By using an exaggerated example of a model or problem, scenarios give us a non-threatening way of looking at ourselves and discussing alternative approaches.

Scene: A mandatory three-hour in-service session for all staff members in a large county-wide Adult Basic Education program. An outside consultant has been brought in to help programs increase numbers of students successfully completing the GED. The scene begins with several participants talking during the break, sharing their honest feelings about the session in progress.

John: Doesn't she realize we've tried all those things she's talking about? Does she think we don't know our jobs?

Mary: I feel like I'm a kid back in the classroom. I've been sitting here making a grocery list and writing my lesson plans for next week.

Sharon: Well, I'm so new at all of this, I'm just hoping I can get some help. Maybe she's just getting warmed up. I hear she knows the GED test inside and out.

The workshop consultant reconvenes the session. She begins to lecture, asking participants to fill in the blanks in their participant notebooks.

Sharon asks a question about a math problem. Mary perks up and offers a suggestion from her class. The consultant says she's not going to cover that in today's session, but it's a good question for later. Maybe she can see Sharon after the workshop, right now she has a lot of material to get through before the lunch break.

Facilitator stops the action and asks the audience questions, such as: What's going on? How were participants feeling? How was the consultant feeling? What do you think were the expectations of the county supervisor when she arranged this session? Which staff development models did you see reflected in this scene?

Audience members can ask questions of the actors, who stay in role for the discussion period.

A member of the facilitation team records observations and key words on flip chart pages. These notes are posted and used for further discussion and reflection later in the Institute.

— Developed by CLS Staff and New England Adult Education Social Action Theater for Literacy Trainers Institute

ACTIVITY

Is This Staff Development?

Another scenario

Scene: Lunch-time conversation among co-workers at a county ABE program site. The discussion centers on teaching reading strategies. Margaret describes a student's difficulty and asks others how they have handled similar situations. Joann tells about a recent success with a student. Jane mentions a helpful article she has read. Margaret asks Jane when she ever finds time to read.

There follows a general discussion about how helpful it would be to take the time to read and discuss together as co-workers. The program director comes in, overhearing part of the conversation:

Joanne: Could we develop a staff study group?

Director: Sure, in the evenings, on your own time? Great!

Margaret: No, as part of our staff development time. Don't we get twelve hours?

Director: I don't know if a study group could count as inservice hours, if it's really staff development.

Facilitator stops the action and asks questions to the audience such as: What is going on here? Is this staff development? What is the director thinking? What are the teachers feeling?

A member of the facilitation team records observations and key words for use in later discussion.

— Developed by CLS Staff with New England Adult Education Social Action Theater for use in Literacy Trainers Institute

learn. By looking at models and using scenarios to help us reflect on our own past experiences with staff development, Institute participants agreed that often staff development as we have known it takes people through only one or two stages of learning. What is usually missing is the practice, action, and reflection over time.

Getting ready to help others learn includes developing a vision of where we want to be, determining and taking into account the needs and experiences of the participants, and being clear about the model or approach that will best enable us to meet their needs and move toward our vision. When we are clear about the "why" and "what for," we are ready to determine the objectives of our staff development: the "what." In the next chapter we will focus on the "what" and the "how," moving from planning to design.

3

Putting Together the Pieces: Developing a Design for Staff Development

- ***Participatory staff development combines structure with freedom and flexibility. The role of the facilitator is to guide, not control, the process.***

- ***It recognizes the roles of reflection, analysis and questioning; experimentation and practice; and the introduction of new knowledge.***

- ***It uses a variety of activities and formats to involve participants in their own learning.***

- ***It builds a community of learners.***

After we have started planning a staff development process (determined the vision we are reaching for, gathered background information, identified the participants and their needs) we embark on the process that we at the Center think is most fun—designing the flow and sequence of activities. As a team we work from the objectives developed in the planning process to design a learning experience for participants (and ourselves!).

Designing takes us from the Big Picture vision to the specifics of how to get there. In the design stage our training takes shape; we make decisions about what concepts and topics will be covered, how it will be carried out (methods, activities and materials), and the flow and balance of methods and activities. We also finalize the logistics of any form of staff development: *where*, *when* and *who*.

Logistics

Attention to logistical details can make or break a staff development event of any length. Careful logistical planning pays off for the planners/facilitators in particular. If the design of an event is good and if the people who come are engaged with each other the event may be successful even with a lot of logistical glitches. But it will be a nightmare for the facilitators. The more that is thought of and taken care of in advance, the more fun the facilitation team will have and the more attention you can pay to the participants and the process during the event. The following checklist outlines those details.

Designing Staff Development

When designing staff development, the planning team first determines the objectives indicated by the needs and vision of the group, as discussed in Chapter 2. Then comes sorting the pieces of the puzzle. Which format, experience, type of activity, will help us get where we want to go? We start putting together the design, the flow of activities or learning experiences.

Activities are the building blocks of the learning process. They are the shared experiences which enable a group to come together around a particular piece of learning. Activities are what you do in participatory staff development. They are chosen to help a group accomplish an objective. In addition to the overall goals and objectives, each activity also has an objective for which it is chosen. This may be as simple as allowing people to introduce themselves or may be as complex as helping people to express their fears about a particular area of work. Some common objectives for an activity include:

- to introduce new information
- to bring out participants' various experiences
- to reflect on a common problem
- to practice a new skill
- to evaluate a session
- to build community
- to provide opportunities for personal reflection
- to relax and have fun.

A Planning Checklist

Participants

- determine any requirements for participation (for example, ABE Level I teacher, ESL experience, etc.)
- do recruitment—letters, phone calls, fliers
- select and notify participants (include response form and needs assessment, if written form is being used)
- send participants
  - — advance information on program and logistics (when, where, food, roommates, dress, map/directions, cost)
  - — advance information on expectations, readings
- compile information on participants who plan to take part (addresses, phone, teaching experience, program)
- set up registration process

Resources

- secure funding
- determine reimbursement and put process in place

Logistics

- book the place you will be meeting
- arrange for any equipment you will need (VCR, easel, tape player)
- get audio-visual materials
- organize meals and breaks
- check space you will be using for:
  - — outlets and curtains
  - — space and furniture for large and small group work
  - — wall space for posting flip-chart paper

Materials

- purchase/collect supplies: flip charts, markers, tape, stapler, paper
- collect other materials for various activities
- copy and organize handouts
- organize displays, resources
- purchase loose-leaf notebooks or folders for participants' materials

Documentation

- decide how to document event
- get equipment/supplies needed (camera, tape or video recorder)

— Adapted from *Educating for a Change*, p. 36.

Reflection

When I planned my project the tutors who taught ESL students were the tutors I planned to work with to develop a more learner-centered curriculum. What I had not taken into consideration was the amount of additional time volunteers were willing to give. Most of the tutoring is done within a fifty-mile radius of the office in Chattanooga and it proved to be difficult to get the volunteers together and for them to attend more than one workshop. An additional problem was that the most popular time to hold the workshops was in the evening when most of the tutors worked with their students. The majority of the tutors in this group work full-time. From the original ESL workshop, ten tutors decided to try to get together once a month to work on the project.

What I actually did was to survey tutors currently in the program to determine what, if any, additional training would help them to improve their lessons and make them more interesting. Based on the survey three workshops were planned.

The ESL workshop was scheduled for late September. Forty-five minutes of the workshop were allotted to a discussion of learner-centered participatory education and a demonstration lesson. The tutors were given a choice of choosing something from their wallet or purse that would best represent who they were. After choosing the article they were to discuss with their partner the reasons for making that choice. Then they were to write about it. Tutors were also given the choice of preparing a personal time line. They worked in pairs discussing the project asking questions, etc. After working individually they came together as a group to share their writing. Due to time constraints only a few had time to share. Everyone seemed to enjoy the lesson and to see the application for making lessons more learner centered. A sign up sheet was passed around for those who wanted to meet again to plan lessons to use with students. Ten people signed up for an additional workshop. Others indicated an interest but could not participate at the present time.

The second workshop was held the third week in October. After mapping, stem sentences and the use of pictures and photographs were discussed and practiced, the group decided on a topic to develop. Wedding customs was the topic chosen. The tutors went through the lesson themselves and thoroughly enjoyed sharing special memories and traditions with others in the group. The plan was to present this lesson to their students and meet again in a month to discuss the results. Since these tutors are tutoring one-on-one, they will do the lesson along with their students. They are beginning to see the advantage of working with a group of students. The plan for the next meeting is to work on a lesson plan involving traditional food and to share the results of their lesson on wedding customs with the group. Several people are both investigating outings for the students and the possibility of having a dinner prepared by tutors and students in February. This will allow them to share experiences, traditions, customs and to develop a feeling of community.

— Martha Cates
Learner at the Center

The following is a list of some of the activities we used in our institutes and our objectives for each. Note that many activities have more than one objective.

Activity	Objectives
Musical introductions. Participants are in two concentric circles, walking in opposite directions to music. When the music stops, introduce yourself to the person across form you. Give one bit of information about yourself that has nothing to do with literacy or adult education.	• For people to begin to know each other. • To help a new group relax. • To begin to build a community of learners.
Each participant completes a training style inventory. Then divide into groups by training style and read list of descriptors. Discuss "Does this fit you?" Make a symbol poster to represent your style.	• To explore personal training style. • To practice using a non-verbal form of expression.
In a large group discuss article by Peter Senge which people have read the night before. Do people agree with the statement, "Leaders are designers, teachers, and stewards."	• To connect thinking about planning with vision and leadership.
During the first day, keep a wall chart of topics which spark debate or disagreement. Put these "Hot Topics" on index cards and shuffle them. Ask small groups to pick a topic for discussion while practicing facilitation skills.	• To practice facilitation skills. • To use the concerns which people bring with them as material for discussion.
In buzz groups of three participants discuss your worst nightmare in doing a training event. Together brainstorm a list of solutions.	• To give people the opportunity to anticipate their fears and plan together to deal with them.
In a small group, ask each participant to take a picture from their wallet and develop a word cluster about that person. Use the word cluster to write a brief paragraph about the person. Tape picture and writing on a piece of construction paper to make a scrapbook. Discuss how this lesson might be used in an adult education class. Identify the prewriting activity (clustering). Talk about how you might build on this activity.	• To give participants practice using prewriting activities.

Reflection on Design

One of the exciting parts of the Institute for me was helping to plan it. Although the Learner at the Center Institute had been offered before, the first time I participated as a facilitator was in November. Each institute is a unique teaching and learning experience. I like the design part because I like to try to imagine learning experiences before they happen. Providing information to participants is only a small part of the design. The most important ingredient is the process, for individuals and for the group as a whole. It's a real challenge to try and imagine a process before it happens!

And imagining was a big part of the work we did together before the Institute. Imagining the setting—what will the room be like, how would we like the tables to be set up? We imagined the participants coming in. What might they be thinking and feeling? We looked at the topic areas we wanted to cover and brainstormed different ways the topic could be presented. We shared our ideas about activities that might help the topic make sense to the participants. I remember talking about a warm-up activity, something energizing. But then we stopped to ask if this activity might make anyone uncomfortable. We put ourselves in the participants' place to answer the question. We decided that the activity would make us uncomfortable if we were participants, so we tossed the idea out. We tried to imagine what it was like for participants to be tired at the end of the day, and plan activities that were appropriate for a lower level of energy.

Even though we put so much energy into it, the design is a foundation only. It is a structure that helps frame the experience. The truth is, no matter how perfect the plan, there are always a lot of things that cannot be imagined. We never thought there would be poles in the middle of the room and that we would have to scrunch all of our tables on one side. We never imagined that one small exercise would energize the group so much that it would take more than three times the amount of time we had planned. We could not have imagined that a presentation that we thought was perfectly clear and useful was a learning "flop" for the participants. We couldn't believe the food was so good. And of course, no matter how clearly we imagined the process, it didn't turn out the way we thought. It never does. The missing pieces that make the actual event thrive are the contributions made by each individual along the way. The learners bring the design to life so it is infused with the experiences and richness of twenty other people. So, with the best plan in hand, thankfully, there are always a lot of surprises. At the Institute in November, one of the best surprises for me was the excitement that came from working as a learner-centered team, both with Connie and Beth, and with all of the participants.

— Mary Ziegler
CLS Staff

Early in the Participatory Training Institute we asked participants to explore the wide range of activities which they had used in their educational work by playing "Activities Bingo." The bingo "card" both served as an icebreaker and let the group know the variety of activities with which they had experience.

The Components of an Activity

One of the clearest and most useful discussions of activities is found in *Educating for a Change*, and this section draws heavily on this wonderful resource.

An activity almost always includes more than just the "doing" part—for example, the role play, the brainstorming, the presentation. Before the doing, the activity is introduced and explained to the group. Then the activity is carried out by the participants: they read a poem, create a skit, list their experiences with a problem, draw their classroom, hear and discuss a presentation. Finally the participants present to each other what they have done, if they have been in smaller groups, and then together process and reflect on what they have learned.

To introduce an activity, particularly one which is a major component of the event, we try to begin with the participants' own experiences. For example, if we wanted to look at a new form of assessment, we might begin by asking the group to list the various assessments they now use and take a moment to categorize or otherwise discuss their list. Then

Journal

Sunday July 11

Friday I felt very insecure and somewhat overwhelmed by fellow participants when I heard their job titles and experiences. I have only worked in the Adult Education program for a little over a year on a part-time basis. Even though only two days have elapsed, I am feeling much more at ease (still a way to go). The relaxed atmosphere provided by the team of facilitators, ice breakers and formation of home groups helped us begin to know each other on a more personal basis and less formal setting than a regular classroom.

— *Suzanne Howard*
Literacy Trainers Institute

we would introduce the main activity by telling our objective, what we hoped to do for the next period of time. This introduction tells how the activity will be done, the time limits, and the needed materials. If the instructions are complicated it is helpful to write them on a flipchart or handout. Participants are often divided into smaller groups. The excerpt from *Educating for a Change* on page 43 gives various ways to do this dividing.

While the group is involved in the activity, the facilitator usually acts as a resource person, keeping track of time, making sure directions are clear. There are times when facilitators take an active part in doing the activity. For example, when we use dialogue journals (short written exchanges between people) in our institutes, we usually take part.

ACTIVITY

ACTIVITIES BINGO

Find fellow participants who have used the following, as part of a learning experience designed for others. Mark off as you go along. Will you bingo?

organized a panel discussion	brain-storming	role play or socio-drama	case study	videotaped a session and played it back for participants
body sculpture dance	discussion	set up a planned debate	asked participants to tell about and reflect on their own experiences	asked participants to keep a journal or do another writing activity
buzz groups	music	**FREE**	a chalk-board or a flip chart	asked participants to draw
film, slides or filmstrip	planned feedback activities	asked a resource person to make a presentation	divided participants into small work groups	cartoons or other forms of humor
visioning activities	played a simulation game	silence	poetry or literature activity	ice-breaker or warm-up

ACTIVITY

Using Information from Survey Forms in Designing

From the information we gathered from participant registration forms, we knew we would have a group of people with varied levels of experience both in program teaching and in training and facilitating staff development. To ease anxieties and set the tone of shared responsibility for the week, we used this information as the basis for one of the first activities during the opening session.

After introductions, we described to the group their shared characteristics and experience, as well as the wide range of interests and experience in training. We then grouped participants into "Home Groups", a grouping of people from the same area of the state, which were used throughout the week for discussion and reflection. In the first Home Group meeting that evening, participants were asked to talk about their training and staff development experiences and to share one expectation and one fear about the week.

— Developed by CLS Staff for Literacy Trainers Institute

The final component, the presentation and processing of the activity, may be most important. This is the time when the results are presented or restated, and the participants reflect on what they have learned. Occasionally, for example with an activity done to relax the group, this discussion may be very brief, only asking for comment or reaction. Even a brief reflection period gives the group an opportunity to note for themselves whether and how they might do something similar.

For most activities, however, final reflection and discussion are a way to synthesize or bring together what participants are learning from an activity. This is often the moment when people say, "Ohhh, that was what was going on!" By making explicit what has happened, often by writing it down on newsprint, learning is clarified and solidified. This final component includes:

- reporting back or presenting from the activity,
- looking for key learnings, insights, and analyzing the results, and
- summarizing what was learned.

The Hope Lesson is a sample activity from the Learner at the Center Institute workplan. Note that participants are asked to do two different activities, reading and writing a

ACTIVITY

Hope Lesson

Objective	Introducing the learner-centered lesson
Introduction	Discussion (record responses on a *flip chart*) What is hope? What do you hope for in your life? What do you hope for from this institute? What do you hope for in our work together in this institute? Discussion: What do our responses have in common?
Activity	Read poem by Langston Hughes, "Hope" Read it out loud together, ask people to read their favorite lines individually, read round-robin, read as a group the first line followed by an individual reading the second line and so on
Processing	Discussion: How does this poem make you feel? How is this poem about hope? How does Langston Hughes connect his feelings and hope? How do we connect our feelings and hope from the discussion we had earlier?
Activity	Writing: Ask participants to write their own 4-line poems, starting *Sometimes when I'm* ...
Presentation	Ask participants to share their poems
Processing	Discussion: What have we learned about each other this morning? What do we have in common? How do we differ?

Adapted from King, Jereann, Johathan M. Estes, Hanna Fingeret, Page McCullough, *It Brought a Richness to Me: A Resource Manual for Participatory Literacy Practitioners*, Durham, NC: Literacy South: 1993. Used with permission.

Comments on the Hope Lesson

These comments were made by Learner at the Center participants after we tried the Hope lesson activity.

—I enjoyed the poem on Hope very much. It was very uplifting.

—I liked the poetry writing exercise. Others' poetry made me feel good.

—I really enjoyed HOPE—both reading and thinking about its writing. With my group I will make a student-generated list of words that could fit into the stem.

—I enjoyed not only writing the poems, but hearing them. Hearing was the best.

—I thoroughly enjoyed the reading of the poetry versus individually and collectively.

—I felt uncomfortable writing poetry.

—Did not enjoy writing poem, but appreciated not having to share it. Enjoyed poem discussion.

poem, within this session. The processing also goes on throughout the session, ending with a final summary of what was learned.

Take Into Account

Designing a learning experience—a workshop, an action research project, a study circle—involves putting together a series of activities to help the group reach their (and your) objectives. As you put together your learning plan or agenda there are several factors to take into account in addition to the objectives. As you choose activities consider if you are

Ideas for Dividing People into Groups

• **Grouping by numbers.** Number off by the number of groups you need. So for a session of twenty people where you want to form four small groups, participants would number off from one to four. Have people group afterwards by number into the four groups.

• **By symbols.** Prepare pieces of paper with as many different symbols as you need groups. If you want to form four groups of five people you might have five triangles, squares, circles and rectangles. Each person picks a symbol and finds others with the same symbol.

• **Self-selection.** When you want people to divide into groups according to their interest in a topic or theme, you can post the topics in different places on the wall around the room. Ask participants to "vote with their feet" by going to the topic that most interests them. If there are too many people for any given theme, you can subdivide the group. If there is no interest in a given topic, it doesn't get discussed.

• **By sound.** This is useful for later in a longer program after people have gotten to know one another and won't feel self-conscious. It uses the same process as the symbol method, although this time each person gets a piece of paper describing a sound. Participants find their group by moving around the room making the sound. To make it even more interesting people can do the activity with their eyes closed. We use animal sounds, machine sounds, baby sounds—use your imagination, have fun!

• **Pre-formed groups.** Sometimes you need to have a particular mix of people for specific purposes: so you list the group members and where they will be working on a flip-chart and post them. Preparing the list in advance can save time and avoid confusion during the session.

Educating for a Change, p. 73. Reprinted with permission.

comfortable with them and if you think the group will be comfortable. Trying an activity which is a challenge for you and the group is fine—you will all learn; but if you are really uncomfortable, so likely will be the group. And even if you are comfortable, it is important to consider the group make-up, their age, openness to new experiences and ideas, gender relations, etc.

Variety is another consideration. Activities should include moving around as well as sitting and talking. Group size should vary. Activities which involve intense personal reflec-

Reporting Back from Small Groups

• Different questions from each group. Each group reports back on a different question. All the questions are covered.

• Only one question reported back. Groups report back on only one of the questions discussed (the key question). Notes on other questions might be posted so other groups can take a look at them during a break.

• Different forms of report back. Each group can be asked to use a different form of report back (visual, dramatic, verbal, song, etc.) or can choose the form the members feel most comfortable with.

• Simultaneous plenaries. We use this method when small groups have prepared skits or dramatic presentations and the group as a whole is too large for everyone to see all of the presentations. We break the main body of participants into as many groups as we need, with one facilitator and three to four presentations in each. All of these mini-plenaries can take place at the same time.

• Gallery review. Each group posts its material and participants walk around this instant gallery to see what others have done. A representative of each group should remain with that group's work to help answer questions from other participants. You can also leave space in the group's charts for comments or questions from the other participants.

• Common format. About fifteen or twenty minutes before the end of the small-group discussion period, you ask each group to focus on its report back and to synthesize the discussion. You can provide a sample format:

The main points we discussed were (no more than 3)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

and we concluded that

_____

We recommend

_____

One of the most interesting/exciting points we discussed and would like to share with the plenary

_____

_____

Educating for a Change, pp. 74-75.
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Room Arrangement

Research has shown that the arrangement of a room has a strong effect on the participation in a discussion. Those who can see all the other faces are at an advantage and those who cannot are at a disadvantage. If people are sitting in straight rows, it is very unlikely that a good discussion will develop between them because they cannot see one another's faces. Most questions and comments will be directed to those facing the group.

Every effort should be made to enable the participants to sit in one circle where everyone can see everyone else's face. If the circle becomes so big that people cannot hear each other, it is better to have two concentric circles (or horseshoes, if they need to see something on the wall).

Training for Transformation, v. 2, p. 9.
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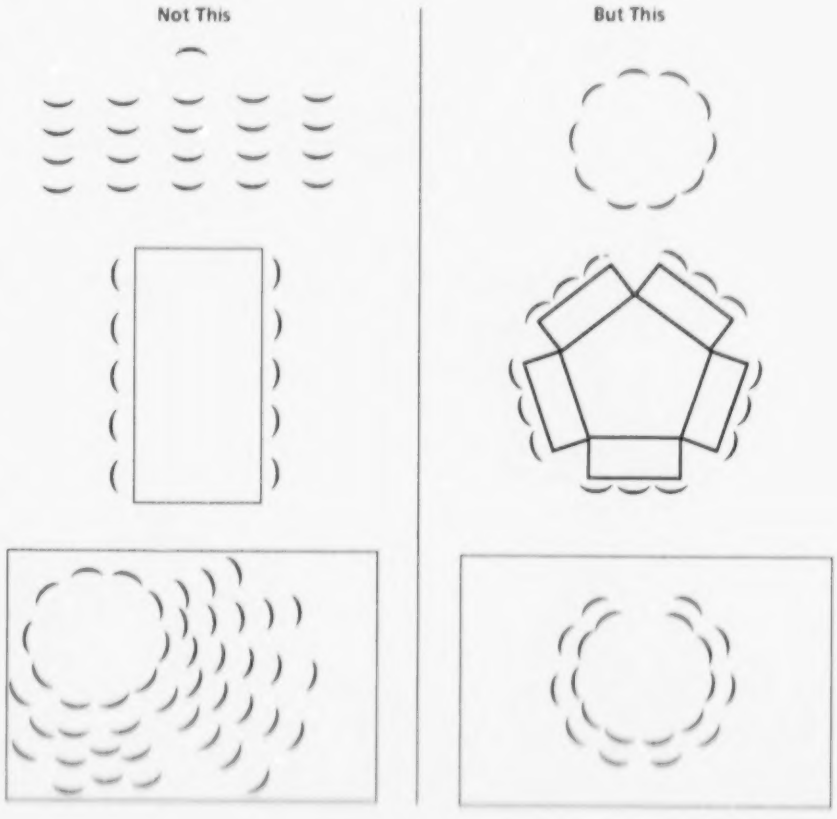

Group Size

The majority of people find it difficult to speak in a big groups of strangers. Also, there is usually not enough time for everyone to speak. Therefore if everyone is to participate actively, small groups are essential.

The majority of people find it difficult to listen very attentively for long periods. Therefore talks should be short and people should be given an opportunity to discuss in small groups the points made.

We all remember much better what we have discovered and said ourselves rather than what others have told us. Therefore participants should be given questions leading them to express all they have learned from their own experience first. This needs to be done in small groups. A resource person or animator, can sum up these points briefly and add their own insights afterwards, instead of taking a long time telling people what they already know.

Pairs are useful for:
- interviews
- intimate sharing
- practicing some skills (e.g. listening or feedback)
- a quick buzz with one's neighbor to stir a passive, sleepy group into action.

3's are very useful for:
- getting everyone thinking and participating actively. (One can be passive in a group of 5 but this is hardly possible in a group of 3.)
- testing out an idea one is hesitant to present to the big group. If two people think it is worthwhile one might risk saying it to the whole group.

4's, 5's and 6's add a bit more variety for sharing ideas and insights. This can be a good size for a planning team or discussion of a film or more complex situation. However, the bigger the group gets the longer the discussion and the longer it will take to make decisions.

6-12 This is a good size for sharing ideas when the group has plenty of time, e.g. a regular study or discussion group. But from this point onwards, a group begins to need an appointed (or accepted) animator or leader. All members should try to be sensitive to the needs of the group (see Task and Maintenance Theory), but an animator fills those needs not met by other members, especially in a new group.

30 A group this size can develop a real spirit of community in a 4-5 day workshop. Most people will be able to participate actively in whole group sessions. As the group gets bigger, this becomes more difficult. It will be necessary with groups this size to break into smaller groups of different kinds or different purposes.

Rule of Thumb. The bigger a group is the more skillful leadership and definite structure it needs in order to enable everyone to contribute freely and feel satisfaction in the meeting.

Training for Transformation, v. 2, p 10.
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tion may need to be followed by a way to relax. Drawing, acting, writing, and singing are all ways ideas might be presented.

Timing is another consideration—time of day, time in the workshop, the amount of time available. An obvious example of poor timing would be scheduling an activity after lunch which involves a lot of sitting and listening; this is a good time for a more active activity. An activity which requires participants to share their feelings usually works best when people have had the opportunity to get to know each other a little. And as frustrating as it feels to the planning team, it is better to allow enough time for activities to develop (and to allow enough free time) rather than try to cram in too much.

Space arrangement and group size are discussed in excerpts from *Training for Transformation.*

The Workplan

You have decided what activities to do and in what sequence. You have checked the timing and it fits and flows. You know who will facilitate which part. The final step of design is to finalize a detailed workplan, a working agenda for the facilitation team. Like an agenda it includes a schedule of events with time and place. But it is more detailed than the agenda you will hand out, and it includes details about who will do what, materials needed, things to take note of as you go along. It should include space to write notes and reminders. Each facilitator may want to color code their own. As examples, we've included an excerpt from a Learner at the Center workplan, and a plan developed by participants in a Literacy Trainers Institute. They use them to tie their activities together.

Finally, we check our ideas, activities and workplan against our theoretical models of participatory learner-centered literacy education. Do our plans give the opportunity to build a community of learners? Do we build on experience? Will we try out new skills, add new information, and synthesize what has been learned? How will we evaluate our thinking? At each stage, is there a way for participants to give feedback to the facilitators, to discuss among themselves, to

ask questions and reflect? Are we following our guidelines:

- Experience it
- Try it out
- Reflect on it
- Draw in new knowledge
- Try it again

The cycle of planning, designing, facilitating, and evaluating doesn't always flow so logically and seamlessly. In our

Workplan

Sunday evening

Purpose:	Begin to build community
Plan:	
7:00	Welcome (Juliet) Introductions (Connie) 1. Quick go-round, names and where you are from 2. Icebreaker—Ball toss Say the person's name to whom you throw the ball; can be anyone in the group. After everyone has caught the ball, throw the ball around one more time, in the same pattern. Midway through, leader throws in another ball or object. May add two or three. At this point, names are shouted, and balls are dropped. Everyone usually ends up laughing and knowing at least five new names.
7:30	Banners (for more introduction) (Beth) Each person makes a banner in three parts to introduce themselves, their program and their community. Hand out *scissors, glue, paper, magazines.* Use pictures and words. Take about 20 minutes to make, 30 minutes to show. Collect banners and hang. Banners will decorate room for remainder of the week.
8:30	Business (Hanna) Give out *agendas.* Discuss any concerns or questions. Give out *notebooks* and review. Get a headcount for Thursday dinner.
9:00	Refreshments

Developed for Learner at the Center.

experience with many institutes, workshops and action research groups, we often move backward or sideways through the process. The location and time constraints can shape an event rather than the other way around. Sometimes we're asked to facilitate a learning event for which we haven't done the planning. But in general, we are committed to thorough planning and careful designing for the reasons listed in "Why We Spend Time Planning," because it supports participants and facilitators in doing their best work.

Family Literacy "Dinner" Theme

ICE BREAKERS

No. 1: Place Setting

Materials: Plastic knives, forks, spoons, paper plates, cups

Objective: Ice breaker; break into small groups

Directions: Distribute one item to each participant as they enter. Ask them to find 4 others who have the different utensils to complete a place setting. This will be their "family group" for breakout discussions.

No. 2: Introduce a Dinner Guest

Materials: Large sheet of paper, markers

Objective: Participants become more comfortable working together; introduces them.

Directions: Using scenario of dinner party in new neighborhood of organization, each participant interviews another participant for a few minutes and then introduces him/her to the whole group using his/her name and giving a bit of information about that person. After all have had an opportunity, facilitator helps group review, matching names and information with people.
(Options: Interview questions can be favorite foods, last meal, where they like to eat, etc.).

VISIONING

Materials: Cheap white paper plates, markers

Objective: Identify components of a good family literacy program

Directions: Ask participants to imagine that they are at a covered dish dinner. Distribute white paper plates and markers. Ask participants to choose what family literacy components they would choose to "put on their plates." What are the ingredients of an ideal/good family literacy program. Participants may draw, use symbols, or write notes.

(Continued on next page)

(Continued from page 49)

PUBLISHING/SHARING

Materials: Flip chart, markers

Objective: Consensus/discussion of components and needs of family literacy programs

Directions: Participants share ideas of components of good family literacy programs. Facilitator lists on chart paper. Discussion of what is already in place. Lists side by side. Is it feast or famine?

PRIORITIZE

Continuation of discussion above.
What are necessities (meat and potatoes) of a good family literacy program?
How do these components fit together? (balanced meal)
What is already working? What needs beefing up? What do we need?

BREAK

GENERALIZE

Materials: Charts and handout on plan, family literacy

Directions: Present plan—Facilitator or Resource person

- background (handout)
- previous method (handout)
- suggested cycle (handout)

Discussion: How can we apply this plan to meeting our family literacy programming needs? How can families at risk use this strategy in their own families?

APPLYING

Directions: Break down into small groups to discuss what actions we can take
What are options? Who should be on planning team?

EVALUATION

Open-ended sentences.

Developed by the Family Literacy Work Team:
Bonnie Thomas, Carol Ergenbright,
and Renee Branham, East Tennessee Institute

Points to remember as you design are:

- Participatory staff development is structured yet flexible.
- Staff development is a process; it happens over time.
- It starts where people are.
- It brings in new knowledge.
- It provides time to analyze and reflect.
- It provides a variety of ways—reading, listening, discussing, acting, drawing—for people to learn hands-on.

ACTIVITY

Multi-Level Classrooms

Objectives: Participants will work together to solve problems of the multi-level classroom.

Agenda:

• Ice breaker—any activity to introduce participants to each other and facilitators.

• Scenario, to illustrate the problems of the multi-level classroom. (Role players may be recruited from participants and coached in their roles prior to the workshop.)

***Scene** – A teacher with students of varying skill levels and needs in a classroom. Each student has a name pinned on her, for identification by the audience of workshop participants. Students include: one who has entered the class because she was sent by another agency; another who is working on pre-GED skills but lacks good writing skills; another who is Spanish-speaking, with little knowledge of English; and a fourth who reads on about a fifth grade level, has difficulty writing complete sentences. Teacher is trying to work with each student individually; each student keeps pressing for his or her concern. Teacher becomes increasingly frustrated.*

• Small group discussions. Facilitator stops the action, and asks workshop participants to suggest strategies for addressing the problems experienced by students and teachers.

If group is large enough, assign participants to a particular student (put students' name on workshop folder), and ask small groups to discuss what happened, and to suggest other possibilities for "their" student.

• Groups report back to the larger group. Facilitators chart the suggestions.

Are there common responses? What does this experience show us? What do our own classroom experiences tell us?

— Excerpted from a workshop design developed by the West Tennessee Institute Multi-level Classroom Work Team: Ann Cannon, Emma Hopper, Laura Liebergesell, Arlene Joslin, Matthew Sharp, Nancy Brewer.

Steps or Moments in an Activity

1. **Introduction: Explaining the Activity**
   - explain the objectives of the activity
   - give the history/background of the activity if appropriate
   - explain the task and the time available, checking for clarity and consent
   - identify and distribute materials/handouts if any
   - groupings—how to divide and where to go

2. **Preparing the Activity**
   - participants work at something, often in groups (preparation)
   - facilitator is available as a resource or to clarify
   - facilitator monitors time

3. **Presenting and Discussing the Activity**
   - if in small groups, come back to larger group
   - pull out the experience
   - look for patterns/analysis
   - add new content/theory
   - synthesis

Educating for a Change, p. 76.
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Why We Spend Time Planning

Those of us committed to democratic education practice cannot afford not to spend the necessary time planning and designing our work.

Why we spend time planning:
- to show respect for people
- to ensure better use of time and resources
- to avoid the temptation to talk at people
- to begin to deal with our nightmares
- to help ensure control of the process by participants
- to ensure co-ordination with co-facilitators
- to build participant interests and concerns into the program
- to structure activities that maximize participation
- to build in optional activities that can be used to redesign the program or agenda during the session itself

Educating for a Change, p. 33.
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4

Facititating the Process

- ***Effective staff development has clear facilitation, with shared responsibility and accountability among facilitators and participants for the outcomes of the experience.***

- ***It sets an atmosphere which respects the dignity and diversity of all involved. It breaks isolation and builds a community of learners.***

- ***It combines structure with freedom and flexibility. The role of the facilitator is to encourage and guide, not control, the process.***

Facilitate means to make easier. In staff development the role of the facilitator is to make it easier for people to learn to participate in a group process as well as to make sure that the content is meaningful and appropriate. Once staff development has been designed and the participants are gathered, the active work of group facilitation begins. Facilitators work with the participants as they move through (and redesign) the learning process. Facilitators of participatory learning not only help participants experience the learning process, they also work to build a community of learners, develop a setting which respects the diversity of the group, and develop shared accountability and responsibility with the group.

We have learned from both Institutes that teaching facilitation skills is often the biggest challenge, both for us as facilitators and for participants. How do we teach something which is part intuition, part practice, and part knowledge of

people and how they work in groups? How do we help build strong facilitation teams and give experience in shared facilitation? In the Literacy Trainers Institutes we drew on a variety of sources and experiences to help participants strengthen their facilitation skills.

What do we mean by facilitation skills? Our list is not exhaustive, but we think it covers the basics. Facilitators of effective participatory staff development are adept in:

- Understanding group process
- Listening
- Asking questions
- Giving and receiving feedback
- Getting everyone's ideas
- Summarizing
- Handling demanding situations and individuals.

Reflections

I feel a dampness on my forehead and my heart pounding against my chest. I get this way—sweaty, scared, miserable—when I'm not ready for a session I'm to facilitate. "Ready" for me means a written-down plan, checked and rechecked, with at least one or two contingency ideas in my head, in case the plan flops. But it's ten minutes to go, and I'm not sure how we'll handle the session. Brenda and I are co-facilitators, and we haven't gotten everything nailed down. I look over at Brenda—we haven't ever really facilitated together, just the two of us—and I see she looks fairly unconcerned, gives me a big smile. Damn, what's the matter with her! Doesn't she know enough to be nervous? I'm supposed to start this session ...still not sure which of several directions to go. I can't stand this. Only five minutes to go. Brenda is chatting with participants. *"Brenda, I need help!"* I telegraph with my eyes. She walks over, makes a suggestion that has just occurred to her. It was a great suggestion, but I didn't feel ready to facilitate using the new plan. Brenda feels fine about switching out and leading this one. I breathe a big sigh of relief. Later on, we give each other feedback on the session. *"Brenda, I felt like I let you down, bailed out at the last minute,"* I say. *"No way,"* Brenda assures me. *"That's what partners are for. Anyway, I like being spontaneous."* I laugh. *"It's a good thing you do, Brenda. You pulled that one out for us. Now let's go over tomorrow one more time. And as long as we're meeting, can we re-check those handouts? And what about the coffee, who's getting the coffee for Thursday? Do you think we should type up the newsprint tonight?"*

— Connie White
CLS Staff

These are complex skills, which need more than just an introduction and a practice session to become ingrained and internalized. Institute participants with considerable experience in training others expressed a need for more practice, more time spent on facilitation techniques. As a planning team, we recognized the enormity of the task, and realized in hindsight that we could have focused an entire Institute on group work skills alone. This chapter, then, just touches on some of the ways we have worked on facilitation skills in our Institutes. For some skills, we share our thinking and approaches; for others, we let the words of others speak for us.

Understanding Group Process

It is generally accepted that groups that come together for a particular task, whether a short-term committee or a long-term Institute, study circle, or action research group, move through recognizable stages of "togetherness." Several models of group development describe five phases. Being familiar with these phases can help facilitators choose appropriate activities and topics, and be comfortable with changes in group behavior.

During the first phase, sometimes referred to as the "polite stage," members get acquainted and establish the basis for the group. They may worry about whether they will be included or excluded, be dependent on the facilitator for

ACTIVITY

Setting Ground Rules

Whether facilitating a short one-time event or a week-long course, CLS staff have found it helpful for the group to set some basic ground rules. We ask participants to brainstorm a list of possible guidelines for the group. Generally, the list includes: arrive on time, don't interrupt, keep side conversations to a minimum, ask any question no matter how seemingly unimportant, etc. This list is posted on the wall, and can be added to and referred to during the course of the session. This provides a way for participants to begin to think about their role in the formation of an effective working group, and gives us a non-threatening way to identify behaviors that may disrupt or cause discomfort for others.

— CLS Staff

ACTIVITY

A Scenario for Facilitation Skill Building

To help a group of staff developers reflect on the importance of giving complete information, giving clear instructions, and making sure group members understand the reasons for doing activities, we developed a scenario to depict how confusing poor facilitation can sometimes be. This was another presentation by the New England theater group at the Literacy Trainers Institute.

Scene: *Early in a three-day staff development workshop for teachers in Region III. The facilitator is attempting to involve participants in an activity. She has been to a training for staff developers and knows that she shouldn't lecture about her topic, so she has planned a time for participants to talk. She gives the instructions for an activity, and that's all. Participants dominate the discussion; there is discord and chaos.*

Facilitator: Now... I want you to get in diads and talk about retention in your programs.

(A group of participants talking to each other:)

Susan: What does she mean, "diad"?

Jane: I think she means groups of two. What difference does it make if we're two or three?

Susan: Well, let's just talk. We have good retention. We keep records for ten years.

Alice: I think retention is really important. My best students retain 75% of what they learn each week.

Jane: Maybe she means bladder retention! We've been in this room for three hours without a break!

The conversation continues to degenerate and participants are joking and laughing.

The facilitator in our scenario is befuddled. Her intentions are really good. She's giving everyone a chance to talk and to experience an activity, not just sit passively. She wants her session to be "participatory."

Session facilitator stops the action and asks questions of the audience such as: What's going on here? Given what we know about group formation, what does this group need? How could the facilitator have handled things differently? What role does she need to be playing?

Another facilitation team member records observations and key phrases on newsprint and posts for later reflection.

— Developed by CLS Staff and the New England Adult Education Social Action Theater for Literacy Trainers Institute

guidance, stick with safe topics, not take risks or reveal personal thoughts. The task for the facilitator is to create a welcoming atmosphere that encourages participants to feel safe. The facilitator can use activities with comfortable levels of self-disclosure and interaction. The group can agree on common expectations for being together.

In the second stage members become more purposeful, begin to really figure out what they want to do and begin to establish familiar ways of working together. There may be expressions of frustration as members ask for clarification on the schedule, the expectations, activities. The facilitator's role is to be as clear as possible and to provide opportunities for members to make the agenda and its goals their own. Early in a group's history together, it is helpful to ask for volunteers to be Process Observers *(see Apendix 2)*, to get others' opinions and perceptions of the event, and to give feedback to the facilitation team. This helps the facilitators respond to the needs of the group and be as clear as possible in their directions and guidance.

Following closely and sometimes merging with the second stage of clarification and purpose, members may try to influence one another's ideas, values or opinions, and make bids for recognition and influence—hence the term "power stage." Some participants may express discontent with the topic, with the facilities, or with the facilitator. The leaders in the group will begin to emerge, and some may fear that a particularly vocal member may be allowed to take over.

Expressions of disagreement or conflict can be helpful for group development, allowing creative options to emerge from the group. As facilitators we need to be comfortable with the knowledge that this is normal behavior and that we haven't failed at creating the perfect atmosphere! We can give feedback to the group on what we observe and help move the group through this process. We may need to provide strong leadership at times, to insure that issues of power are not disruptive and that participants are not unduly separated by expressions of disagreement.

A fourth commonly recognized step or phase is one in which participants have established comfortable ways of working together, are constructive or cooperative and engage in shared problem solving, and develop a sense of

team work. Participants share ideas, listen actively, and value differences. They are more open about sharing their feelings, and trust the group enough to experiment or try out something new. In a group fortunate enough to reach this stage, the facilitator's role is to help participants pursue their tasks and share their work with each other. In both Institutes described in this issue, participants worked intensively in small groups. By the end of a week, and certainly by the first follow-up workshop, groups were setting their own agenda, their own timetable of work to be done, and often needed the facilitator for attention to logistics or for coordination of activities.

Finally, there is the fifth "proficient stage," which is characterized by unity, high functioning, and mutual acceptance. The group consistently works well together. Trust is high and members' differences are accepted and celebrated. In our experience with staff development where participants come together from a widespread geographic area, a group rarely has the opportunity to be together over a long enough period of time to reach this stage. But if they have, and the group is ending because action research is finished, the Institute

I Took Form

I took form
worked like a storm
tried to keep up with the norm
wanted to perform

then—I dived into the world—was it ready for me? I was all worked up the world wasn't so my dilemmas will continue but I can make a difference I want to perform well I want to be great! I don't want to keep up with the norm I want to be great, I want to get better, I want to be the best I'll work like a storm so I can take form
I want to continue to perform
storm
norm
and take form
Thanks

— Diane Scott
Literacy Trainers Institute

completed, or the study circle has finished (or for whatever reason), members may be sad about loosing the support of the group and will have separation issues to discuss. The facilitator's role is to help participants celebrate their accomplishments, plan ways to stay in touch, and work through any ending issues.

A simpler way to remember the five stages of this group development process is through the jingle: "Form, Conform, Storm, Norm, Perform."

Listening

Listening is often described as a passive skill, but those of us who have tried to be effective listeners know that it takes total concentration and involvement. The term "active listening" is more than just a catch phrase for good human communications; it really does mean active involvement on the part of the listener. Some active listening behaviors include:

- Maintain eye contact with the speaker.

ACTIVITY

Practicing Active Listening: A Skill-Building Session

With complete group:
Brainstorm characteristics of a good listener, asking participants to give examples of when they really felt listened to. Record key phrases on flip chart.

Discuss "red flags," listening behaviors or words that get in the way of positive communication. Brainstorm a list of these negative behaviors, record and post.

Review some of the key behaviors of active listening. (A group of teachers can usually generate a long list.)

In small groups of three or four, distribute several Hot Topic cards to each small group for discussion starters. (Hot Topic cards are generated from a list of topics which have been "siderailers" for the group. For more on Hot Topic cards, see p. 59.) One person talks about the topic, one listens, and the others observe. The observers give feedback to the listener on her active listening skills. After four minutes, the roles are switched. This continues until each group member has been the listener. For the observers, this activity also provides practice in giving feedback.

— CLS Staff

Listening Techniques

Listening is an art, a skill, and a discipline. As in the case of other skills, it needs self-control. The individual must understand what is involved in listening and develop the necessary self-mastery to be silent and listen, keeping down his or her own needs and concentrating attention on the other with a spirit of humility.

Listening obviously is based on hearing and understanding what others say to us. Hearing becomes listening only when we pay attention to what is said and follow it very closely.

Objectives in Listening in Any Helping Relationship

The objectives when we listen to people are both basic and simple.

1. We want people to talk freely and frankly.
2. We want them to cover matters and problems that are important to them.
3. We want them to furnish as much information as they can.
4. We want them to get greater insight and understanding of their problem as they talk it out.
5. We want them to try to see the causes and reasons for their problems and to figure out what can be done about them.

Some Do's and Don'ts of Listening

In listening we should try to do the following:

a. Show interest.
b. Be understanding of the other person.
c. Express empathy.
d. Single out the problem if there is one.
e. Listen for causes of the problem.
f. Help the speaker associate the problem with the cause.
g. Encourage the speaker to develop competence and motivation to solve his or her own problems.
h. Cultivate the ability to be silent when silence is needed.

In listening, do not do the following:

a. Argue.
b. Interrupt.
c. Pass judgment too quickly or in advance.
d. Give advice unless it is requested by the other.
e. Jump to conclusions.
f. Let the speaker's emotions react too directly on your own.

From Training for Transformation,
v. 2, pp. 29-31.
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- Nod your head or say "yes", or "uh-huh" to indicate that you're listening.
- Use open-ended questions to encourage the speaker to talk more.
- Show by your body language that you're interested: lean toward the speaker, don't fidget.
- Summarize the speaker's comments, or say them back in a way that let's the speaker know you've understood.
- Let there be silence. Don't try to fill every pause.
- Keep the focus of the conversation on the speaker; don't disagree or talk about yourself.

ACTIVITY

Questions to Help a Group Process an Activity

Experiencing/Doing:
- What is going on?
- And?
- Could you offer a suggestion?
- What is the worst/best thing that could happen?

Sharing/reflecting:
- How did you feel about what happened?
- Who else had the same experience? different experience?
- Were there any surprises?
- What did you observe?

Interpreting/Making Sense:
- How do you account for the fact that _____?
- How was this significant?
- How do we fit these different responses together?
- How could this have gone differently?
- What does this suggest to you about your self/group?
- What do you understand better?

Generalizing/Drawing Conclusions:
- What does this suggest to you about _____ in general?
- Is this like anything else you have experienced?
- How does this relate with other experiences you have had?
- So?
- What did you learn?

Applying/Taking Action:
- What would you like to do with this?
- How could you repeat this experience again?
- How can you do this at home?
- What are the options?
- What are the consequences?
- What are the risks?

— Developed by Literacy Trainers Institute

Asking Questions

Often a well-timed, open-ended question by a facilitator or participant can move a group to a new level of understanding or action, deepen the discussion, or help the group see where it needs to go next. Conversely, an ill-timed, closed question can bring discussion to a screeching halt. Knowing when and how to ask questions and pose problems is a tricky business.

Open-ended questions don't have one right answer. They stimulate thinking and lead participants to share opinions and points of view. Closed questions usually have an exact reply, a correct answer. They usually discourage discussion and often make participants (and facilitators) feel like they are in unequal roles. So questions which keep a discussion flowing and which build on the knowledge of the group are usually open-ended questions. The list of questions on page 61 to help move participants through a cycle of learning was generated by participants in the Literacy Trainers Institute.

Giving and Receiving Feedback

Facilitators of staff development groups need to be able to recognize feedback, know when giving feedback is appropriate, and be able to distinguish helpful and unhelpful ways of giving feedback. "Tips on Giving and Getting Feedback" is a helpful reference for facilitators, as well as for participants.

Getting Everyone's Ideas

Participatory staff development is dependent on full participation from everyone. Facilitators set an expectation for everyone to be "fully present" and active in the learning process. We also need to take care to monitor our own "talk time." When the facilitator is talking, the participants aren't. Often a few participants have a great deal to offer, and while we want their contributions, we also need to be sure that we don't put other participants in the position of having to interrupt in order to speak. The section on Demanding Situations deals with "dominators."

If we believe that everyone has something valuable to

Tips on Giving and Getting Feedback

A strategy we've used in many skill shops with educators is to develop guidelines for feedback. The following tips draw on participants' own lists from such sessions and can be used by facilitators and participants alike.

• **Talk in the first person. Statements such as** "I felt . . ." or "When I heard you say . . ." communicate personal responsibility for responses. They do not claim, nor should they, to speak for others.

• **Be specific.** Statements such as "When you said this, I..." or "Your idea about..." focus on the particular action or statement. These statements bring the discussion close to home, make it easier to examine and tackle. Avoid comments such as "You keep..." or "You always...."

• **Challenge the idea or action, not the person.** It doesn't help to draw attention to the pitch of someone's voice or a stutter. Stick to actions or behaviors that a person can modify (if they agree this would be useful).

• **Combine recognition of what worked with a challenge to improve.** Few people are so thick-skinned that they do not need acknowledgement of their achievements. Providing this recognition helps to situate suggestions and challenges in a context of effort and accomplishment. It helps a person hear the spirit of a positive criticism.

Again, be as specific as possible. For example, if a person sounds preachy in part of the presentation but engages people in a lively way in another part, refer to the positive side as a specific model of tone, strategy, and style.

Explore what makes something work. Although successes are not accidents, they aren't as noticeable as problems. Uncovering the thoughts and skills behind a success can be instructive.

• **Ask questions to clarify or probe reasons.** Questions such as "What did you take into account when you decided...?" or "What did you mean when you said...?" credits the person with selection and judgement. The questions also help avoid criticisms and suggestions that miss the mark and are irrelevant to what the person is trying to do.

• **Identify the bridges.** When you are giving critical feedback to a participant, remind her or him of what you have in common. Comments such as "I know that when we do X we tend to..." remind the person that you're on the same side. Sometimes a part of this same bridge may be to acknowledge differences. For example, "As a man, my experience is a bit different, but..."

• **Acknowledge how you connect to a problem.** Because people can learn as much from what goes badly as from what goes well, it helps to show how you have also experienced a thorny problem. Statements such as "I've had this problem myself, too" or "This is helpful for me/us to think about because..." emphasize that this is not just an academic exercise for you as facilitator.

(Continued on next page)

(Continued from page 63)

• **Wherever possible, make suggestions for alternative approaches.** Questions such as "Have you considered...?" or "What would happen if we tried...?" open a range of possible different responses. The use of "we" suggests that the issue and its solution is of interest to the whole group. Encourage others to add to the generation of different options. This will make it clear that there is not just one other (and therefore better) way to do it.

• **Don't assume that a difference is political.** Check to see whether a conflict is based on different experience, different social identity, or a different role in the organization. The response may clarify the extent to which debate can change a person's view and ascertain how important a view is to that person's self-image.

Educating for a Change, pp. 130-131.
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contribute from their own experience, how do we encourage the shy, quiet, or resisting participant? By using a variety of activities and focusing on several different ways of participating (in small groups, large groups, journal writing, drawing, singing), we have a better chance of getting everyone's ideas. Many of the activities used in this book (or listed in Appendix 2) can be used to help draw out everyone's experiences, observations, and reflections. Brainstorming is a technique used in many activities and one which encourages wide participation.

Because everyone's contributions are valuable, we record key phrases and observations on newsprint and keep these pages taped to the walls for easy reference and for "revisiting" during later discussions. It is helpful to title and number the sheets. You may want to consider using different colors to highlight different categories. And make sure your writing is clear and large enough to be read by all participants. "Use of Newsprint" gives some good pointers.

Summarizing

Summarizing pulls the group back into focus. It keeps the discussion moving forward when participants are beginning to ramble or get off track. It helps move discussion from one phase to another, for example from "sharing" to "interpret-

ing" to "generalizing" to "applying." It helps participants see and clarify their own knowledge and ideas.

Summarizing can be done both verbally and graphically. The facilitator at key moments can say something like: "I hear you saying . . ." or "So far we have discussed . . ." or "This

Brainstorming

Brainstorming is one technique to gather as many ideas as possible, before deciding which ones to discuss in depth. It avoids the frequent mistake of spending too much time discussing the first suggestion offered so that not enough time is left to discuss other and, perhaps, better suggestions.

It is necessary to give people a little time in 2's or 3's to bring their ideas to the top of their minds first. The brainstorming should then be done quickly, one animator drawing one point at a time from participants and another recording on newsprint. Comments and discussion on individual points should not be allowed until all the suggestions have been collected.

Brainstorming is only a starting point. Afterwards, in-depth discussion of individual points is necessary, otherwise the group will feel that everything is dealt with superficially.

Use of Newsprint

Recording on newsprint is another important skill and not as easy as it looks.

It is most helpful during brainstorming when one needs a list of the main concerns, agenda for a meeting, main insights from an exercise (e.g., difficulties in listening, etc.). When people see their suggestions written down (and later included in the program by the planning group) they get a sense that their contributions are taken seriously and this fosters a spirit of trust.

As the writer has her or his back to the group most of the time, one needs two people, one to draw the ideas out of the group, and one to write. When using newsprint one should:

- try to summarize each contribution in a few words,
- use, where possible, the key words of the participants so that they recognize their own contributions,
- avoid slowing up the process, by constantly checking what to write. When people in the group start dictating to the writer, the whole point of the brainstorming is lost.

Training for Transformation, v. 2, p. 16.
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is what I have been hearing...". Then you might follow with a question, "What else?" or "Have I understood this?" or "Do you agree on this?"

On newsprint (flip charts) you may want to write key words and concepts as they are expressed. Summarize or rephrase as needed, but check with the speaker by asking "Is this what you are saying?" You may want to synthesize what has been said into a design or picture. Again, check with the group to be sure it represents their thinking.

When you are summarizing, be clear in your own mind about your purpose for summarizing. Don't feel you must summarize too frequently. Be careful not to cut off a discussion flow that is "on target." Make sure that your summary is accepted by the group and captures the thinking you have done together.

Reflections

I really enjoyed the Home Group activities. The interaction—getting to see our feedback valued and actually see it written down. Everyone had something to contribute. I liked the fact that we shared ideas in both small and large group activities.

— Emma Hopper
Literacy Trainers Institute

Demanding Situations and Individuals

Even experienced, seasoned facilitators often say that handling difficult people and situations is their most significant challenge. In our work with trainers, we feel that we have only touched the surface of learning how to work skillfully and creatively with the opportunities that conflict and dissension can bring. All too often, it is tempting to focus solely on the individual personalities and behaviors of our participants and not look at what stage of formation the group is in, or at the unstated discomfort that a particular topic can create for some individuals. That said, there are some tips we've learned for working with group members who are not contributing to a positive learning environment.

Dominators. Dominators have a lot to say and a big need to say it. They often have helpful contributions to make, but seem unaware or unconcerned about the needs of others to participate.

Newer facilitators often have a hard time cutting members' discussions off; it seems rude or presumptuous. It took us a while to learn that the group depends on the facilitator to keep it on topic, keep it moving, and make sure that everyone has a chance to participate—those are our responsibilities as facilitators. Not only does the group give you tacit

permission to cut off dominators, it counts on you to do it.

Sometimes all it takes is a reminder from the facilitator that everyone needs an opportunity to talk: "*Let's be sure everybody can talk once before anybody talks twice.*" To break a pattern of one or two participants dominating the conversation, change approaches: move to small groups instead of large groups, writing instead of talking, movement instead of sitting.

The skill of summarizing is an important one. If a participant goes on too long, a facilitator can summarize by saying, "*You are saying that..., is that right?*" (Now don't pause too long here!). Immediately go on to ask, "*How does someone else feel about that?*"

In some circumstances, a facilitator may need to be very clear about stopping a dominator. "*Thank you for your contribution. I'm cutting you off now so that someone else can talk.*"

Side Talkers. Side conversations can be very distracting to the group. We've found that they may also be positive signals that participants want to contribute and have reactions to what is going on in the group. In that case, side conversations can remind us that we need to be sure that everyone feels comfortable about speaking. Are we giving plenty of opportunities for discussion? Is the topic controversial, calling for small group rather than large group process, so that participants will feel more comfortable in offering opinions?

If several unrelated conversations are going on, it might also be a reminder that our process or content needs work and is not sufficiently engaging!

We've learned that habits and culture play a big role in whether or not participants carry on side conversations. As facilitators in a group with which we are not familiar, we may not know or understand these factors. Ignoring side conversations is usually the best policy.

However, if the same few people consistently carry on side conversations that are truly disruptive to group process, there are some things to try. You might suggest ground rules that limit talking to remarks addressed to the whole group. You might mix up groups and avoid seating "offenders" together. As facilitator, you might remark that you are having trouble hearing people's comments, and wait before you

continue. If others have the floor, you might ask that the group give its attention to them.

Troublemakers. We can think of plenty of situations in which "troublemakers" have saved the day. Aren't we fortunate to have people who will argue, question and disagree—how else could change come about? However, we sometimes wish troublemakers would find another group in which to stir things up! One of the most helpful things we can learn as facilitators is to use conflict in the group as yeast; it can make for a wonderfully rich and satisfying loaf.

As facilitators we need to discern the difference between genuine disagreement over philosophy, values and methodology (which may need to be brought out, acknowledged and moved past), and disagreement over things that are less central but still important.

There may be group members for whom arguing and disagreeing are simply habits and their customary way of interacting. We need not take this personally or feel we must acknowledge and work out every point of disagreement. The purposes of group work often do not include reaching consensus.

Wanderers. As facilitators, we are called on to know the difference between a group's need to switch directions or even abandon the agenda, and an individual's desire to talk about something else. In the first case, we need to listen to the group and involve them in making a decision about how the time is spent; in the latter case, it is helpful to use a summarizing remark and then move back to the topic at hand.

We've found that visual cues are important in helping the group stay on topic: an agenda written on newsprint, a list of questions up for discussion or decisions to be made, with times assigned for different items when appropriate—all are ways of focusing the group.

However, not all work lends itself to these techniques. The more exploratory the group's work, the harder it may be to stay on topic. And not every wanderer should be reigned in; a participant may see a relationship that we don't, and an important connection may be made. Some detours lead to interesting places!

A facilitator might list participants' questions and comments that don't directly relate to the group's topic of discussion on a sheet of newsprint and move to them if there is time. She might ask the group if they want to omit a part of the agenda to deal with a new or unrelated idea.

Silent Types. All of us have different ways of relating in a group. Often silent sorts may be tuned in and actively engaged with their own thoughts. It may be hard to tell if a participant would like to speak, but needs encouragement, or simply prefers to be quiet. Over time, however, we believe almost everyone will have something to share. Good icebreakers, in which all are invited to share some fun activity, help people get over the hurdle of speaking out in the group that first time. Other techniques include asking group members to talk in pairs about a topic as a way to "warm up" and get ideas flowing, then get responses in the large group. One of our favorite things to try is, after asking a question to the group, add, *Would someone who hasn't yet spoken like to respond?* Often this is all the encouragement a quieter participant needs. If there are group members who still do not speak, it may be helpful to visit with them during breaks, get to know them a bit on a more individual basis. During a session, you can even refer to something the person said in these conversations if appropriate, as a way to add their contribution to the group.

Late Arrivals. Participants coming in late may be disruptive, important information may be missed, activities may already be in progress. However, late arrivals can also present an opportunity to quickly summarize what has happened up to that point, and participants can be brought into the process. "*Can someone briefly tell Bill what we've been talking about?*" or " *Will someone share a surprise or an insight to help Patty know what our morning has been like?*" Or, depending on the size of the group, you may want to continue and welcome the newcomer at a break.

The best defense here is a good offense; make a habit of being serious about the starting time, and start when you say you will, even if everyone is not yet present. In a longer workshop where there will be several starts and stops for

breaks, meals, and so on, remind the group of the next starting time and ask if that meets their needs. Be realistic about the time it takes to go to the rest room, take a short walk, visit with others, or whatever activity participants may do during breaks. We've seen it work well as a preventative measure for facilitators to invite those who are late to tell a joke to the group, or sing (although some participants like this so much they may be purposefully late!); but those kinds of suggestions should be used only after the group is acquainted, and only if the atmosphere is very relaxed and congenial.

Learning More About Facilitation

These brief introductions to some basic facilitation skills should serve as a jumping off point for more reading and practice. Many of the books listed in Appendix 3 contain helpful facilitation tips. Facilitation is certainly a skill that is learned by doing, but having access to other's ideas and experiences really helps.

Careful planning also helps make facilitation easier. If you know what you are going to do, you are more able to concentrate on how to do it and what is happening in the process.

Because participatory processes involve a lot of interchange, a lot of change, and a lot of intense personal interaction, many different demands are placed on a facilitator. We co-facilitate sessions whenever possible, to give participants a range of styles and personalities, to model shared responsibility and cooperation, to give ourselves more flexibility. And because it is more fun and relaxing to have a teammate!

5

Figuring Out What Worked and What Next: The Evaluation Process

- ***Effective staff development expands the knowledge base and standards of the field. Together participants create new knowledge, which can raise the quality of services offered to students. Participants grow professionally and personally.***

Most people think of evaluation with boredom or horror. It is something that has to be done for the funders or for the state office, not something we want to do for ourselves. If we can conceive of evaluation in a different way, however, we can see how vital a part of participatory teaching and learning it can be. In this chapter we look at evaluation of staff development first as a participatory process which can help us build better programs, and then more specifically at evaluating the ongoing processes and learnings of particular staff development events.

Mining for the Value of Staff Development

The focus of good evaluation is on the "value" of what we are doing. We think of the approach as that of a miner, looking for gems or nuggets of gold. One way to find gems and flakes of gold, of course, is not to mine at all, but to pan for them in streams. For educators, that could mean looking for spin-offs of a project or staff development activity. Mining itself can dig down to various depths. We can skim off the surface, collecting participants' reactions to our staff development efforts. We can dig a little deeper and look to see if

participants have learned something. We can delve deeper still to see if there have been any changes in behavior. And at the core, we can assess the overall impacts of our work, its ultimate value.

Reaction. It is important to gather the immediate reactions of participants both during and at the end of a training event. We need to know if people are comfortable, confused, excited, or intimidated. This process evaluation, which occurs as part of an event, allows us to make changes as we proceed.

Learning. Participants can tell us what they have learned from a staff development activity. They can give us some feedback immediately following the activity, and more in follow-up discussions later. It is important to look for learnings which were not part of the planners' agenda—side ben-

Reflections

I have been able to do learner-centered teaching in the last month because of the exposure to the concept this summer. If I had just read about the concept, I would not have been as eager to try it out in class. Participating in the Summer Institute and experiencing a "hands-on" approach enabled me to understand it enough to try it. Of all the courses I have ever taken, this by far has been the most valuable due to the participatory and learner-centered approach in teaching it. Being involved in the process, I understood it better than if I had sat in class listening to a lecturer behind a podium.

Coming back together for the follow-up weekend was very helpful to me. It helped me to see that my struggle to understand and implement a learner-centered approach was shared by all the participants. We have all had seeds planted in our consciousness which are going to take time to grow.

This week has helped to clarify and has provided a way to bring a lot of my ideas together. The validation of ideas and ideals is always important. These works have been done and lend a legitimate support for what has often been seen as radical or unstructured methods.

The session on portfolios pointed out a problem I am beginning to see with my writing folders. The very size is beginning to discourage one of my students. Needless to say, we will discuss portfolios.

A learner-centered literacy class must be a class where the power is shared, where the learner's needs (as he has defined them) are met and his dignity is preserved. This has been a goal for my program. It has been broadened and expanded through the years.

— Barbara King
Learner at the Center

efits from other participants, unexpected outcomes, even learning how not to do things!

Behavior change. If staff development is about helping practitioners make changes to improve their practice, this should be the "meat" of evaluation. It is seldom done, mainly because it is expensive and time-consuming to see if participants are really teaching in a different way.

Impact. Assessing impact of staff development would look beyond individual practitioners to look at changes in the field of practice, in programs, and in institutions. We want to get beyond individual teachers to programs and systems that meet learner needs. Assessing impact means looking over time and over broad areas.

Ideally the evaluation plan should be part of planning. We should decide up front just how deep we want to (or are able to) dig in our mining for value. We need to figure out

Reflections

After conducting the ESL, initial training and writing workshops, it became obvious that changes in the program were needed. One, there was not enough time to adequately cover learner-centered participatory education. Two, not as many tutors attended the workshops as I had hoped. Part of this was due to having the workshops too close together and at the main office. Three, tutors need a place to keep portfolios and have access to more supplemental material for lesson planning. Four, tutors/students need to have more of a feeling of community.

A series of meetings were held to discuss changes in the program. Based on the tutor survey and staff input, initial tutor training sessions beginning in January will include an hour orientation workshop followed a week later by a two-hour general workshop. After this workshop everyone will have been matched with a student or students. At this time they will be given the books and other material they will need to work with their students. A second two-hour workshop to meet their specific needs [ESL, ABE, GED] will be held later that week. The tutors will receive five hours of training plus a one-on-one consultation before meeting a student for the first time. This will enable me to have more opportunity to discuss and practice learner-centered participatory education with the tutors.

— *Martha Cates*
Learner at the Center

why we are doing an evaluation, who are the key players, how deep we can dig, and what we are going to do with the answers we get. Evaluation makes most sense when we have a clear purpose and will use what we find in subsequent decisions and actions. It makes least sense when it is a report which gets filed away and never looked at again.

When we know why we are evaluating, who is to be involved, and how deep we can dig, we need to decide on key evaluation questions. This is both the hardest and the most important part of designing evaluation. "Good" questions are both important and answerable. We usually start with far too many, and have to refine and group and discard marginal questions. We often ask questions that we cannot answer within the reality of time, personnel and budget. Distilling the questions is a process that takes time and thought, and should involve the key players.

We need to decide what information is needed to answer our questions, what the sources are, and how we will collect it. The quality of the information itself needs to be evaluated for bias and incompleteness. Good researchers talk about "triangulating" their data—collecting data from different sources to check on its validity. In our evaluation we use a triangle of approaches: ask, observe, study *(Figure 6)*.

Ask. Who will you ask for information and how will you do it? You might ask participants themselves, other teachers/administrators in their programs, learners in their classes, or others. You might use oral histories, interviews (in person, on phone, on-line), surveys, focus groups, community meetings, writing activities.

Observe. How would you be able to see if learning has taken place and behavior change happening? You might observe classrooms, staff meetings, workshops, informal gatherings around the coffee pot. To be most useful as an evaluation tools (rather than as pure research), the observations need to be disciplined and structured. Observers need to be clear what they are looking for and use notes, checklists or other tools to record observations. For example, to observe a learner-centered classroom, one might count interactions which flow teacher to learner, learner to teacher, learner to learner.

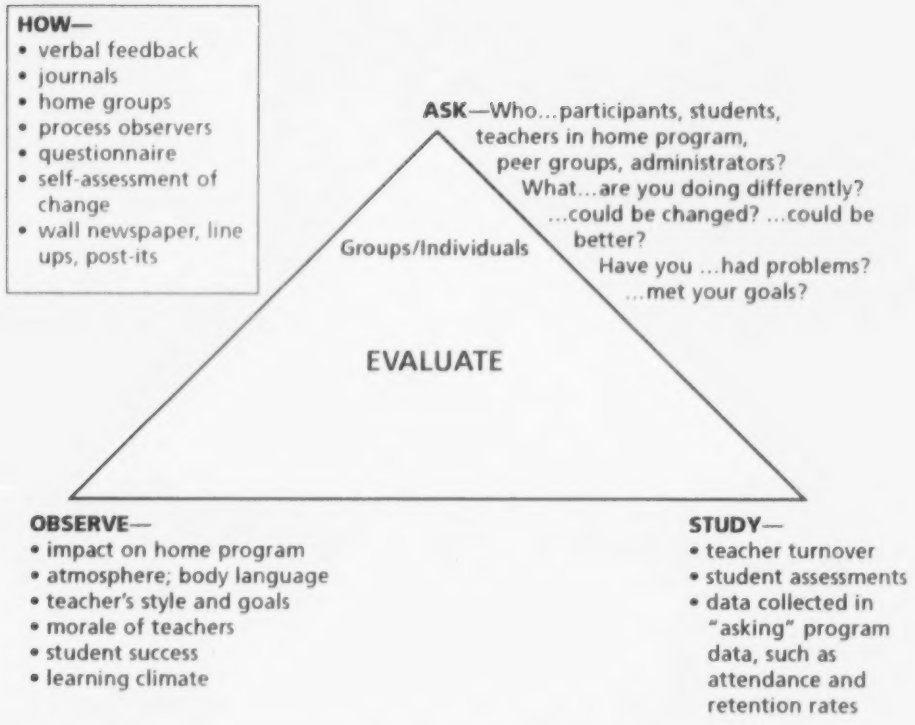
HOW—
• verbal feedback
• journals
• home groups
• process observers
• questionnaire
• self-assessment of change
• wall newspaper, line ups, post-its
ASK—Who...participants, students, teachers in home program, peer groups, administrators?
What...are you doing differently? ...could be changed? ...could be better?
Have you ...had problems? ...met your goals?
Groups/Individuals
EVALUATE
OBSERVE—
• impact on home program
• atmosphere; body language
• teacher's style and goals
• morale of teachers
• student success
• learning climate
STUDY—
• teacher turnover
• student assessments
• data collected in "asking" program data, such as attendance and retention rates

Figure 6

Study. What archival material or documentation might help answer our evaluation questions? We might look at participants' journals and reports, portfolios, curriculum materials used in a program, program brochures/newsletters, field notes and journals of the evaluators. Quantitative data can be studied too, including program attendance and retention data, staff turnover, choices about how funds are spent.

Often, evaluators find it easiest to get information from participants who are enthusiastic about a staff development activity. Resisters may resist the evaluation as well. But it is important to look for opportunities to hear from those who are less positive. Sometimes resisters may simply be resisting change. Sometimes they may resist because the activity does not fit with their culture or reality. If we never ask those who

liked it, we'll never know how to do it better next time. We need to look for barriers as well as opportunities, for what didn't work as well as what did. And if we do that well—we have asked the right questions, involved the right people—we can learn and improve our staff development practices.

Evaluating an Event

.In the previous section we discussed looking for the value of staff development throughout a program. If this evaluation process is developed and carried out in a participatory way by program staff, the evaluation is itself staff development.

In this section we examine immediate evaluation of a particular staff development event—a workshop, study circle, institute. We do ongoing process evaluation during an event, building in processes and activities which give participants opportunities to express their reactions and observations—and giving facilitators chances to modify our plans and approaches. At the end of an event we ask for a more comprehensive, usually written, evaluation from participants. We learn from their evaluations and apply what we have learned in our work.

There are a wide variety of ongoing evaluation possibilities. During one of the Literacy Trainers Institutes, participants listed all the ways they had evaluated themselves, their participation and the overall effectiveness of the Institute:

- Questionnaires
- Survey
- Self-assessment tools
- Discussion and dialogue
- Process observers
- Evie Evaluator, and other "Post-It" evaluations
- Group time-lines
- Down and dirty line-up
- Home groups
- Giving feedback
- Journals and portfolios.

Several of these techniques are described in this chapter and others in Appendix 2.

ACTIVITY

Process Observers

One method we have used for ongoing evaluation during an Institute is the designation of process observers. Volunteers are asked to act as observers of what is happening throughout a day. The role of process observers is to:

- be available to participants for input into the course as we go along
- reflect on how the day went, keeping in mind:
  - participation
  - objectives and purpose (clearly stated?)
  - pacing (too fast? too slow?)
  - balance of new and familiar content
  - variety of techniques and activities
  - language
  - logistics (location, room arrangement, comfort of participants, meals, etc.)

At the end of the day, they prepare a report based on feedback from other participants and their own observations during the day. The report is brief and given at the beginning of the morning session on the following day. If changes need to be made based on the report they are taken up at that time.

— Adapted from *Educating for a Change*.

ACTIVITY

Evaluation by Sticky

At the March Learner at the Center session we used an evaluation activity we learned from *Mary Ziegler*. At the end of the five days we put up the Institute agenda on a large sheet of paper on the wall. Then we gave each participant pink and yellow "stickies" or post-it notes. We asked them to look over the agenda and think about any activities or times when they felt particularly connected—or disconnected—with what was happening. They were asked to write the positive comments on pink stickies and the negative or disconnected comments on yellow stickies and put them on the activity to which they referred. When everyone was finished we had an immediate visual evaluation of which sessions made the biggest impression on people. Often the same activity had brought out a lot of positive and negative feelings. This proved to be a good quick way to get feedback on a five-day session. We could also have had the wall agenda up from the beginning of the session, giving people the opportunity to "comment" whenever they wanted.

— *CLS Staff*

ACTIVITY

Evie the Evaluator

On a large sheet of paper draw (or trace) a life-sized female figure. She is Evie, the Evaluator.

Participants are invited to share thoughts and comments on the event by writing on post-it notes. Each person then puts their comments on "Evie." New ideas go on her head. Feelings go on her heart. Actions go on her feet.

The entire group gets an immediate visual representation of their reactions to the event, and the facilitators can later use the comments as part of a more systematic evaluation.

Adapted from
Educating for a Change, p. 106.

ACTIVITY

Worksheet for Team Review of Training Plan

(From follow-up session of Participatory Trainers Institute)

Original plan, objectives and activities. What was the original focus, back in July?
On recognition of the reality of multi-level classroom, identifying problems inherent in this reality, and providing instructors with an opportunity to consider creative approaches to classroom management and individualized instruction.

What did you do differently when you implemented the plan?
I was unable (or unwilling) to attempt the role-play. Instead I used the "draw your class" activity from the summer workshop.

What worked?
That activity worked, as did the "tent" introduction idea (did I get it here?). Three-fourths of my teachers used an adaptation of it in beginning their classes and setting the stage for participatory goal setting and acknowledging different strengths and interests in the classroom. I thought that was great!

What didn't work?
Time! The entire two and a half hours could have been given to the "Multi-Level Classroom" topic, as the group was very interested and found it pertinent. However, it was necessary to give 45 minutes to program logistics. The teachers asked for follow-up on the topic.

Did the training activity have the characteristics of participatory training? Could it have been more participatory? In what ways?
Surprise! In reading over the characteristics, I believe it had them all! Everyone FELT involved. We had too many logistics to deal with for new people, however, and did not move through the entire learning cycle.

— Nancy Brewer
Literacy Trainer's Institute

Reflections

- Participatory training works.
- People who are power brokers will find it hard to accept.
- No question, comment, or idea was ignored or diverted to a hidden agenda.
- Participatory training/staff development requires much more energy and planning than making a presentation or lecturing!
- Participatory training is a partnership!
- My brain is swirling with so many new ideas, and I'm trying to think how to take them "home."

— Comments from the "head" of Evie Evaluator during a Literacy Trainers Institute

Reflection and Evaluation

As social change educators, we also want to find ways to open up our work to constructive criticism.

We used to only do evaluations at the end of the event, asking questions like: Did we accomplish what we set out to do? Did the people who came meet their objectives? One problem we've faced, though, is that participants tend to be polite at the end of a session whereas in the middle they are more likely to be frank because their input could affect their own learning.

Increasingly we realize that to be effective we needed information from participants during an event about both the content and the process so that we could make the necessary changes as we went along. We asked some of these questions:

- What are you learning? How are you feeling?
- How is the content useful? What else do you need?
- Who has participated? Who hasn't? Why?
- How is the pacing? Too fast or too slow?
- How is the balance between new and familiar content?
- How is the language level? What has been clear/unclear?

So we began to build in evaluation as a reflection on the process throughout the event. That's why we place "reflection" in the middle of the spiral. One activity we use—which we call "the Fly on the Ceiling"—involves participants stopping each day to reflect on what they've been through. This gives all of us an opportunity to look back and ask ourselves: What did we do? What did we learn or feel? What can we use or adapt for our own work?

Some educators worry that this built-in repeated reflection takes up too much time. But, for our part, we made an extremely liberating discovery we'd like to share with you: you don't have to cover all of the items on your agenda. As social change educators we are trying to empower people for action, and sometimes that means encountering resistance. If we cram the session so full that every participant voice that is raised seems to be a delay, what does that say about the importance we attach to the views of participants?

We have found that the element of time can be used as a mask for underlying political values or choices. Participants will most likely read "We don't have enough time for that" as "This doesn't matter" or "I don't want to do it."

We think it's important to build in time for people to take control of the education process, to negotiate real changes in the agenda, and to resist overload.

Educating for a Change, p. 60-61.
Reprinted with permission.

Creating New Knowledge

When we have completed an evaluation we have a collection of new information. Some we may look at and note as something to try to take into account for another event: *The room was too hot. The food at this center was wonderful. We needed more breaks.* Other information either confirms our planning and design or alerts us to changes which we need to consider: *This was a powerful leaning experience! I really enjoyed hearing from other teachers. The readings were not very helpful.* As staff developers we take what we learn from evaluations to do a better job.

As teachers take part in participatory staff development they are also assembling and synthesizing what they know—individually and collectively. They are creating knowledge. Similarly, the people who plan and facilitate the staff development process develop new processes, come to new understandings, create knowledge. The evaluation process is one opportunity to document and collect this new knowledge. From a well-designed evaluation process we assemble new information and ideas that will be valuable to other teachers and staff developers. Because participatory staff development is a process, not an event, creating ways to share this new knowledge is another challenge for those who want to help teachers be learners.

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Epilogue

The prologue for this book came from our experiences. You will write the epilogue from your experiences as a learner, a teacher, and a facilitator of other teachers' learning. This may well be some of the most exciting, challenging work of your career as an adult educator. You will be taking what you have learned as a teacher of adults and "learning better what you already know," as Paulo Freire put it. And then, instead of trying to pour your knowledge into your colleagues' heads, you will create opportunities to learn. You won't come with the answers, but with carefully crafted questions. You may design and build the car, but you will not drive it. The road to each teacher's learning has to be chosen and followed by that teacher. Your job as a participatory staff developer is to create the best vehicle that you can and then trust the teachers you work with to drive it.

On the Road With Participatory Staff Development!

Wheels	Keep things moving
Doors	Open to new ideas
Head Lights	Focus on what's ahead
Steering Wheel	Keep it in the right direction
Rearview Mirror	Reflection on past experiences
Radio and Antenna	Listening
Windows	See things clearly
Turn Signals	Flexibility

Developed by West Tennessee Institute participants

Appendix One: The Institutes and the Long-Range Staff Development Plan

1993-94 Literacy Trainers Institutes

Over a nine-month period from July 1993 through March 1994, almost 50 ABE and literacy practitioners in Tennessee were involved in Literacy Trainers Institutes. These Institutes and a shorter non-credit workshop were funded by the Tennessee Literacy Resource Center and a 353 grant from the Tennessee Department of Education, Division of Adult and Community Education. The majority of Institute participants earned three hours of graduate credit from the University of Tennessee.

Two week-long residential Institutes were held during the summer of 1993; one at the University of Tennessee Knoxville and the other at Lambuth College in Jackson, Tennessee. Each summer Institute was followed by a weekend workshop in the fall. Between the residential Institutes and the follow-up weekends, participants tried out training activities which they had developed during the Institutes. A three-day non-credit workshop on principles of participatory staff development was held in Nashville in December 1993 for a different group of 15 practitioners. Participants in all three groups convened at Montgomery Bell State Park in Middle Tennessee on a beautiful weekend in March 1994 for the final follow-up session.

During the Institutes and workshops, participants learned and tried out skills in participatory staff development. They read and discussed articles about the theory and practice of education and training. They wrote their reflections in daily journals. They brainstormed in small groups, acted in role plays, drew, created scenarios, and practiced facilitation skills. They worked intensely in work teams to plan and design a training activity, which they carried out in their home programs, documenting the process. They met in home groups, to share reflections and digest new information. At every step they evaluated the process and their learning, through a variety of means including process observers, wall charts and wall newspapers, down and dirty line-ups, post-its, and the more traditional pencil and paper survey forms. The process was intense, hard work. Expectations were high, and so were energy levels and participation.

Both Institutes and the shorter non-credit workshop followed a similar agenda, although the different sets of participants meant that each "felt" different. The West Tennessee Institute had the advantage of the experience that CLS staff had acquired from their ground-breaking sisters (and brother, only one male participant) in the east. Participants in the East Tennessee Institute had the advantage of a visit by the New England Social Action Theater, and a chance to see drama in action as a staff development tool. The East Tennessee Institute had six participants from the UTK graduate program in Adult Education, all employees in workplace basic skills programs. During the final weekend gathering in March, Dotty Oliver of the New England Theater joined us for a session in scenario develop-

ment and provided consultation on forming a Tennessee Adult Education Theater.

CLS staff who planned and facilitated the Literacy Trainers Institutes were Brenda Bell, Beth Bingman, Juliet Merrifield, and Connie White. Participants and their home programs are listed below by ABE District. In some instances, practitioners have moved to another program or to another position.

District 1
Donna Benton
Joann Lorch
Betty Timberlake
Barbara King
Anne Poe

District 2
Carol Ergenbright
Bonnie Thomas
Margaret Lindop
Ken Kitts
Renee Branham
Carol Coffee
Norma Dawson
Teresa Riggs
Donna Miller
Marie Kelly
Patsy Thornton

District 3
Virginia Frizell
Gail Gray
Edith Key
Hope Lancaster

District 4
Janice Upton
Margaret Bott
Kathleen Lunch
Suzanne Howard
Nancy Brewer

District 5
Carol Feeney
Gerald Martin
Meg Nugent
Donna Strickland
Diane Scott
Angela Lewis
Barbara Brown
Margaret Duncan
Arba Herr
Ann Parker
Vickie Wharton

District 6
Marie Baker
Barbara Wilson
Sarah Campbell
Joyce Hiebert

District 7
Jill Barnett
Laura Liebergesell
Vickie Stratton
Ann Cannon

District 8
Hortense Carpenter
Any Hendrix
Arlene Joslin
George Prange
Nancy Tilley
Sue Long
Tim Clark
Betty Doyle
Stewart Stanfill
Emma Hopper
Matthew Sharp
Evelyn Sutton

Learner at the Center Institutes, 1994-95

The Learner at the Center Institute: Developing Adult Literacy Programs focused on developing and using learner-centered approaches in both staff development and adult education classes. The first Institute was planned and conducted by Connie White and Beth Bingman from the Center for Literacy Studies, and Hanna Fingeret, a visiting professor from Literacy South in Durham, North Carolina. Twenty-six participants from across Tennesse came to the Institute, held at the University of Tennessee Knoxville, during August 1994. A follow-up workshop was held at Henry Horton State Park in November 1994. Most were from ABE programs, but other public and private agencies were represented.

The second Institute was held in the spring and early summer of 1995 at DuBose Conference Center near Chattanooga and at MTSU for a group of eighteen ABE/JOBS teachers from various locations around the state.

Both Institutes began with a five-day residential session. For five intense days participants took part in a variety of activities examining the structure of learner-centered lessons, the role of culture in learning, processes of alternative assessment, and other topics. Participants experienced being part of a learner-centered class. The week's work was based on the Literacy South resource manual, *It Brought a Richness to Me*. This and other readings were collected in a notebook for each participant.

Throughout the week at UT participants met in small groups to plan projects implementing learner-centered practice. When they returned to their programs they carried out these projects during the fall. Project examples included:

- a series of community visits for ESL students,
- a new approach to volunteer tutor training,
- intergenerational story-sharing in an Even Start program,
- introduction of portfolio assessment in a literacy class.

In November the Institute reconvened at Henry Horton State Park for a weekend of reports and reflection. Participants had prepared displays and reports on their projects. In small groups they shared in more detail what they had done and what they had learned. They also spent time reviewing the features of teacher- and learner-centered classes and experiencing adult education theater. In the final activity of the weekend, participants met with others from their ABE staff development district to plan how to share what they had learned. Each group developed a plan of staff development activities.

The second Learner at the Center Institute was designed for teachers in the JOBS program. The general design was like the 1994 Institute, but the focus was on content of particular interest to JOBS teachers and participants, including the welfare reform proposals being discussed in Congress. Again the participants were themselves involved in a variety of learner-centered activities. They then planned projects to carry out in their classes, including:

- working with students to prepare a handbook for new students,
- an investigation of AIDS,
- planning with students for their next steps after earning a GED,
- learning about the historical contributions of African American women,
- teaching math by using needlework.

This group quickly grasped the principles of participatory staff development and rearranged the schedule to give us Sunday morning off. This was appreciated by all—facilitators included!

Participant evaluations of the Institutes were very positive.

"The whole format in presentation and practice at the Institute and the follow-up have made it all very 'do-able' and realistic."

"I have been able to do learner-centered teaching in the last month because of the exposure to the concept this summer. If I had just read about the concept, I would not have been as eager to try it out in class. Participating in the summer institute and experiencing a hands-on approach enabled me to understand it enough to try it. Of all the courses I have ever taken, this by far has been the most valuable due to the participatory and learner-centered approach in teaching it."

"My project helped me more fully understand the learner-centered concept and definitely benefited my trainers and trainees."

"I may need to teach another five years to be able to use the wealth of information that was shared here this weekend!!"

"I think the support, the planning and the organization of the Institute have been extraordinary."

Both the content and the instructional approach seem to have met people's needs and goals, although there were a few glitches in paperwork, and the timing was not good for everyone. Particular points which we want to remember for future institutes include

- the importance for people of *experiencing* what they were learning about,
- the usefulness of modeling instructional strategies,
- the value of dialogue journals,
- the importance of planning activities to build a community of learners,
- the function of projects in enabling participants to apply and consolidate what they had learned in the institute

Participants in Learner at the Center Institutes

District 1
Mary Boehms
Susan Durham
Phyllis Farmer
Jewell Hamm
Barbara King
Reese Thornton

District 2
Roberta Barndt
Norma Dawson
Carol Ergenbright
Connie Mayes
Garnieta McNew

District 3
Clarence Anderson
Elizabeth Hartsfield
Mary Newhouse

District 4
Joseph Avera
Martha Cates
Hazel Finnell
Kathy Gurley
Margaret Swafford
Kim Vernon

District 5
Phyllis Bradley
Frank Brinkley
Louise Clifton
Diane Cohn
Edna Shadowens
Vickie Stratton
Janice Wilkerson

District 6
Roxanne Jennings
Sylvia Klotz
Angela Milan
Karen Moore
Deb Miller
Linda Rowland
Karin Stapleton
Kathy Tidwell
Janet Tidwell

District 7
Sharron Bessent
Paula Hamby
Janice Harper

District 8
Todd Evans
Mary Gause
Betty Sykes

Tennessee Adult Basic Education Staff Development Long Range Plan

This plan was developed by the Ad Hoc Committee on Staff Development, a group of Tennessee Adult Basic Education practitioners convened by the Tennessee Department of Education Division of Adult and Community Education in cooperation with the Center for Literacy Studies.

A complete copy of the plan is available from Teddy Cook, Staff Development Coordinator, Division of Adult and Community Education, 1130 Menzler Road, Nashville, TN 37943, or from the Center for Literacy Studies. The following excerpt from the introduction to the plan describes the role of the committee and the contents of the plan.

In their work together, the Ad Hoc Committee members used many of the same techniques they have recommended as models for staff development in the state. They engaged in participatory, collaborative sessions where brainstorming and small group work produced innovative, creative ideas. They gained input from a broader group of administrators and instructors through state-wide surveys and informal discussions with colleagues. Repeated meetings over a period of time refined ideas. At the conclusions of the work toward this long-range plan, a decision was made to establish an ongoing staff development committee to advise the State Department of Education.

The staff development long-range plan is divided into three parts: staff development for administrators, for instructors and volunteers, and "special topics" that cut across programs. Within each section of the plan is outlined first the context of staff development needs and current practices in that area, second the content area of skills and knowledge which the committee considers all staff should attain, third the possible range of methods of delivery which the committee identified as being appropriate, and fourth the 1993-94 priorities for 353 staff development funding.

Members of the Staff Development Committee, 1992 – 94

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Appendix Two: More on Activities

Throughout this sourcebook we have described activities that we and other Tennessee staff developers have used in participatory training. Each activity was chosen with an objective in mind, but, of course, any activity might meet several different objectives, and there are many activities that you might choose for any objective. In this section we briefly discuss eight types of activities and note where examples are described in this book. This is only a beginning list. The activities you use are limited only by your imagination—and your access to the imaginations of others. The resources listed later in this chapter are rich sources.

Icebreakers are used to help participants get to know one another and to build a sense of community in the group. They are often light in tone, but can be more serious. They help the group learn each others' names, a little about each person, and often have some sort of interaction "built in."

Magic Wand – This activity uses a toy wand with stars or glitter that settles from one end to the other. Participants introduce themselves, talking about a particular topic, for example something that happened to them on the way to the event. They can only talk until all the stars in the wand fall to the bottom. An hour glass might also work. In either case you need to be sure the time it takes matches the time you have for introductions times the number of participants.

Ball Toss – Described on page 48

M & Ms – Described on page 23

Musical introductions – Described on page 37

Place setting – Described on page 49

Dinner Guest – Described on page 49

Banners – Described on page 48

Energizers are activities which lift the energy level of the group. When you are designing an event you may want to include an energizer at a time when you anticipate people will be feeling slow, for example right after lunch. But it is also useful to have an energizer in mind for unanticipated slow—or tense—times when the group needs a break.

Music is a great energizer. Stretching to music, clapping, singing a song to begin or end a session, playing a musical children's game are ways to use music to energize.

Take a stretch. Standing, reaching toward the ceiling, bending to the floor to energize.

Activities to develop vision are used to help participants develop and hold their visions of their work. Just as your planning is based on a vision of the big picture—what you want to accomplish with adult education—and of what you hope your program will be, participants also need to define and hold a vision of what they want to accomplish. In a staff development event participants might clarify

their own "big picture" and/or become clearer about what they hope to accomplish in a particular area, for instance, curriculum.

What Would Be There? – In this brainstorming activity participants are asked to think quietly for a few minutes about the elements of an "ideal" community. Then the facilitator goes around the group and asks for one element from each person and records on newsprint until all the ideas have been written down. Then in small groups participants discuss which elements might be affected by adult education programs.

Family Literacy Dinner Party – Described on page 49.

Visioning Activity for Improving Programs Through Staff Development – Described on page 24.

Drawing the Ideal Multi-Level Classroom – Described on page 26.

Activities to pull out experience are the basis of much of what occurs in a participatory staff development event. The participants' experiences are the foundation for much that is learned. Often experiences as an adult educator are what is being examined, but it might also be the participants' experiences as learners, or parents, or community members. One of the riches of adult education is that learners and teachers have so much shared experience.

Where Do You Get Your Water? – We used this exercise with a group of community-based tutors and then adapted it to use with the 1994 Learner at the Center Institute. We asked three questions and recorded the responses to each on newsprint. Where do you get your water? Have you ever had problems with your water? What have you tried to do about these problems? We discussed each question. After we had drawn out what proved to be a remarkable amount of shared experience with water problems, we asked the participants to work in small groups to develop basic skills curriculum activities from the discussion.

What Experience Do You Bring? – Described on page 30.

Using Information from Survey Forms – Described on page 41.

Activities Bingo – Described on page 40.

Writing from Wallet Pictures – Described on page 37.

Activities to add content are also a part of a participatory approach. While you will build on the experiences of participants, you will probably also want to add new information and ideas. Typically content is added by lecturing or assigning readings. Both these are certainly appropriate and part of our institutes. But there are many other ways to bring in new information and ideas or pose a problem to discuss.

Speakers can bring new information to a group. Often there are participants who have important things to share. Or you may want to invite someone from outside the group for a session.

Video can be used both to introduce new information or to pose problems. We have found the videos from the Center for Applied Linguistics are good at suggesting new classroom and program approaches and those from Appalshop to be good for posing problems both for adult educators and students. (See Appendix 3 for ordering information.)

The Hope Lesson – Described on page 4. (To order *It Brought a Richness to Me* see Appendix 3.)

Active Listening Practice – Described on page 59.

Problem Posing Activities are ways to present a problem to consider and develop new understandings as you search for solutions. While there are a wide variety of approaches, from generating codes or themes to using case studies, we have found various forms of theater to be wonderful ways to pose problems and generate discussion. Three approaches we have used are: 1) role play when participants are given different roles to play and a situation to work through as those characters, 2) scenarios when an incident is acted out and then the group discusses possible solutions or reasons, 3) a theater troupe of people who work together over time to develop carefully scripted scenarios acted and discussed before audiences of practitioners.

We have been fortunate to work with the New England Social Action Theater and now a newly formed Tennessee Adult Education Theater. The theater troupe approach builds on the scenario to develop a short theater piece with a setting, characters, and a dilemma. At the climax of the scene the narrator "stops the action" and facilitates a conversation between the audience and the actors who remain in character. The scenes and the discussions are powerful, sometimes really funny, sometimes moving the group to tears. Using theater in this way involves a significant commitment of time and energy, but is very compelling. If you don't have access to a theater group, you can still use the theater techniques of role play and scenario effectively. (See Appendix 3 for more information on contacting the theater groups.)

Workplace Communications Breakdown Scenario. Developed by Meg Nugent, Stewart Stanfill, Amy Hendrix. Literacy Trainers Institute.

Characters: teacher, student/employee, line supervisor.

The scene: the teacher is working with a student/employee who is eager about improving his/her education. Supervisor enters the classroom to pull out the student—they are needed on the production line. Apparently this situation has happened several times before.The teacher verbally irate at the continued intrusions of the supervisor, very frustrated, argues with the supervisor that this is hampering the accomplishments of the student.The supervisor has a job to do. The demands of production necessitate that all employees be utilized to complete the job ASAP. Supervisor is calm and cool, but must have the employee on the job. Holds firm to his position.The student/employee before the supervisor enters is excited because just learned a new concept. When supervisor enters is silent. As teacher and supervisor argues shows through body language discomfort with the situation of having to choose between education and the job. Both are necessary. Skit ends with the supervisor walking out, expecting the student/employee to follow. Student says, "I knew it was a mistake to take this class. Can anyone help me?" Actors stay in character to field questions from the audience.

Other Scenarios – Described on pages 31, 32, and 56.

Multi-level Class Role Play – Described on page 51.

Reflective and Analytical Activities are used to help participants think about what they are learning and to learn from their experiences. An individual insight or a group decision and plan might result from this type of activity.

Dialog journals can be used throughout a training event to encourage individual reflection. Time is set aside each day to work on these journals. Each participant and facilitator writes for 15 or 20 minutes in their journal. The facilitators provide stem sentences to help people get started, but these are optional. Some example of stem sentences are: "This morning I feel..."

or "The discussion last night made me wonder if..." After everyone has written the journals are exchanged either by giving the journal to someone who you want to respond or by placing them in a pile from which everyone chooses a journal. After you read the journal entry for that day, each person has ten minutes to write a response. The journals are then returned to the owners and five more minutes are allotted for people to read the responses they have been given. We have found that not only do dialog journals encourage reflection, but that people receive support and encouragement from them.

Home groups are an activity or process we learned from adult educator Victoria Creed. In the Participatory Trainers Institute we divided the participants into groups of four or five based roughly on geography. These groups were the participants' "home" for the week. There were various other groupings based on work and activities, but this home group is where people gathered to reflect on their experiences. Sometimes the groups were asked to consider a particular question, but there were also times set aside for the home groups to meet and discuss whatever was on their minds. More on Home Groups on page 41.

Family Literacy Discussion – Described on pages 49-50.

Evaluation Activities are used to give the facilitators and the group feedback on how the event is going, what is working well and what is not working, on changes the group or individuals might need. This evaluation n the middle of an event is often referred to as process evaluation. There is also a need for evaluation at the end of an event to capture the group's sense of the effectiveness of the event. As discussed in Chapter 5 the real evaluation of staff development is based on whether or not the desired changes in practice occur in classrooms and programs. The activities described here are activities to be conducted during on at the end of an event.

Guiding questions to focus the participants' thinking and writing on an event are helpful at the end of a session. Written responses serve as a record and are invaluable when planning the next event. The reflection on page 78 is based on a questionnaire.

Process Observers – Described on page 77.

Evie Evaluator or Head, Heart, Feet – Described on page 78.

Evaluation by Sticky – Described on page 77.

A questionnaire used in evaluation is found on page 78.

This is a beginning list of activities. As you work in staff development you will adapt activities for a variety of objectives and develop new ones to share.

Appendix Three: Resources for Participatory Staff Development

In this Appendix we include information on how to contact theater groups and obtain videos, a list of resources available from the Tennessee Literacy Resource Center which we think are particularly useful for participatory staff development, and a bibliography of the readings we used in the Literacy Trainer and Learner at the Center Institutes.

Adult Education Theater

We have learned so much from the New England Adult Education Social Action Theater. The troupe participated in the East Tennessee Participatory Trainer's Institute, and Dorothy Oliver returned for the final session of Literacy Trainers Institutes to work with participants around developing and facilitating scenarios. For additional information on their work contact: Art Ellison, Director, Adult Basic Education, New Hampshire Department of Education, 603-271-2247.

In the spring of 1995 Tennessee practitioners formed the Tennessee Adult Education Theater. The formation of this troupe grew out of the Literacy Trainers Institutes, and was supported by the 1995 Literacy Leadership Workshop (a collaboration between the Tennessee State Library and Archives, the Tennessee Literacy Coalition, and the Division of Adult and Community Education), which brought the New England Theater back to Tennessee. The Tennessee Literacy Coalition is coordinating the development of three regional troupes. For more information and to arrange a performance, contact Dian Dunlop, VISTA, Tennessee Literacy Coalition, 615-298-4738 or 800-323-6986 (Tennessee only).

Videos

Video can be used both to introduce new information or to pose problems. We have found that the series of four videos *Sharing What Works* are good for suggesting new classroom and program approaches. They are available from:

Center for Applied Linguistics
1118 22nd Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20037
(202) 429-9292, Ext. 200

The videos listed below, available from Appalshop, are good for posing problems both for adult educators and students. Appalshop has many films focusing on life in Appalachia, some of which are available on video. Many deal with issues in the lives of adult students and educators. We have shown the following videos at CLS Institutes:

Fast Food Women which examines the lives of women working in the fast food industry.

Homemade Tales: The Life of Florida Slone which presents the rich life of a woman who is also a literacy student.

Long Journey Home, an examination of the ethnic diversity of the region.

Strangers and Kin, a humorous look at the serious subject of stereotypes.

For information on how to order these videos and to order a catalog contact:

Appalshop
306 Madison Street
Whitesburg, KY 41858
(606) 633-0108

Resources available from the Center for Literacy Studies

The following materials about staff development and participatory literacy education are available for loan from the Center for Literacy Studies library. If you are interested in purchasing a book,

items which are available from commercial sources may be located by a bookstore or library by using the ISBN number. For more information on borrowing materials, contact Brenda Bell at 615-974-4109.

The Adult Literacy Resource Institute. *Reflections: An Anthology of Selections from the All Write News, the Newsletter of the Adult Literacy Resource Institute.* (Boston: Adult Literacy Resource Institute, 1993) ID #: 624.

A collection of a wide variety of literacy articles on topics including assessment, critical thinking, ESL, participatory education, basic skills and cultural literacy.

Arnold, Rick, Bev Burke, Carl James, D'Arcy Martin, Barb Thomas. *Educating for a Change.* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 1991). ID #: 1174.
ISBN 0-921284-47-0
ISBN 0-921284-48-9

A rich resource of theory and practical ideas. The writers base their work on the assumptions that education must empower all people to act for change and that education must be based on democratic practices. The book is based on the spiral model. Order directly from:

The Doris Marshall Institute
818 college Street, No. 3
Toronto, Ontario M6G 1C8
Phone : (416) 964-0693

Aubel, Judi. *Participatory Program Evaluation: A Manual for Involving Program Stakeholders in the Evaluation Process.* (Washington, DC: Catholic Relief Services, 1993.) ID #: 1150.

The ideas in this manual are useful to educators even though the book is based on experiences with coordinating evaluations with teams of program implementers in health and nutrition programs. It explains the structure and steps of participatory program evaluation in detail. The book also discusses how evaluation can also be staff development and how the two processes overlap.

Auerbach, Elsa Roberts. *Making Meaning, Making Change: Participatory Curriculum Development for Adult ESL Literacy.* (McHenry, IL: Delta Systems, c1992). ID #: 35.

A documentation of a participatory ESL literacy project, the participatory approach is examined in terms of curricula design that is responsive to the needs and context of individual groups of adult learners. It is useful for any ABE educator interested in participatory approaches and focuses on building a curriculum around themes.

Auvine, Brian, Betsy Densmore, Mary Extrom, Scott Polle, Michael Shanklin. *A Manual for Group Facilitators.* (Madison, WI: The Center for Conflict Resolution, 1978). ID # 1185.

A clearly written, focused look at group facilitation. Includes preparation, getting started with a group, group process, and dealing with the various things which can go wrong. Useful for any facilitator, but particularly for beginners.

Barauski, Sue. *The Staff Development Process, Part One: The Needs Assessment Process.* (Des Plaines, IL: Adult Learning Resource Center, 1995) ID #: 1147.

Funded by a National Institute for Literacy capacity building grant, the process of staff development and its relationship to program design is recorded during an interagency project. A lot of good detail on needs assessment involving participants.

Clarke, Mallory. *Discovery and Respect: A Handbook for Student-Directed Group Learning.* (Seattle, WA: Goodwill Literacy Adult Learning Center, 1991). ID #: 1004.

Popular education as a collaborative effort is outlined and tied to group activities. Ideas developed for adult students can be adapted to staff development.

Crone, Catherine D. and Carmen St. John Hunter, *From the Field: Tested Participatory Activities for Trainers.* (New York: World Education, 1980) ID #: 803. ISBN 0-914262-19-X

A manual and sourcebook of activities prepared "by trainers for trainers." The book includes descriptions of a wide variety of activities to use to build a group, assess needs, and evaluate results. One chapter presents

more that a dozen different training techniques. The index of learning activities includes the time required.

Drennon, Cassandra. *Inquiry and Action: Implementation Guide for Program Administrators and Staff Development Facilitators*. (Richmond, VA: Adult Education Centers for Professional Development, 1994). ID #: 596.

The process of inquiry-based staff development is explained as professional learning driven by the questions practitioners have about their daily practice. This is the handbook used in Virginia to plan and keep track of staff development learning plans.

Dynes, Robin. *Creative Games in Groupwork*. (Bicester, Oxon, UK: Winslow Press, 1990). ID #: 1165. ISBN 0-86388-078-9.

An assortment of games which incorporate a variety of activities, (outdoor, indoor, movement, and written) are outlined to be used to stimulate group involvement and communication. A good source of icebreakers and energizers and group building activities.

Fingeret, Arlene; Paul Jurmo. *Participatory Literacy Education*. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, c1989). ID #: 935. ISBN 1555428614.

Participatory literacy education programs that equally share power between learners and teachers is presented as an alternative to traditional approaches. This book is a series of articles.

Fingeret, Hanna Arlene and Suzanne Cockley. *Teacher's Learning: An Evaluation of ABE Staff Development in Virginia*. (Dayton, VA: The Virginia Adult Educators Research Network, 1992). ID #: 876.

The set of training and support structures designed to help teachers improve their skills and knowledge by the Virginia Adult Basic Education (ABE) program is explained. Can serve as a support in examining and evaluating staff development at a program level.

Gillespie, Marilyn. *Many Literacies: Modules for Training Adult Beginning Readers and Tutors*. (Amherst, MA: Center for International Education, c1990). ID #: 460.

Training modules to use with adult learners are outlined and case studies examined. Especially helpful for staff development with new teachers and tutors.

Henderson, Penny and Gayle Foster. *Groupwork*. (Cambridge, GB: National Extension College, c1991). ID #: 875. ISBN 0-85356-143-6.

A kit that contains three components: Course Leader's Guide, Participants' Guide, and Resource Sheets, introduces all aspects of groupwork for adult learners including preparation, observation, evaluation, and possible problems. This kit has useful background information on how groups work and how to work with groups. There are also many "lessons" or learning processes which might be used as part of staff development on group facilitation.

Henderson, Penny. *Promoting Active Learning*. (Cambridge, GB: National Extension College, 1989). ID #: 873. ISBN 0-85356-029-4.

Active learning activities and other methods to use with the adult learner are introduced for the tutor or instructor.

Hope, Anne and Sally Timmel. *Training for Transformation: A Handbook for Community Workers*. Books 1, 2, 3. (Gweru, Zimbabwe: Mambo Press, 1994). ID #: 1132, 1133, 1134. ISBN 0 86922 256 2.

These books, based on years of experience in Africa, present a training theory and methodology used for literacy instruction and group and community development. Book 2 focuses on group trust, leadership, and decision making and is particularly useful in staff development. Available from:

PACT Publications, Inc.
777 United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017
212-697-6222

Jennings, Sue. *Creative Drama in Groupwork*. (Bicester, Oxon, UK: Winslow Press, c1986). ID #: 1166. ISBN 0-86388-050-9.

Introduces the use of drama in groups and presents dozens of techniques and activities. The book was written both for those working in clinical settings and for more general educational work.

King, Jereann, Jonathan M. Estes, Hanna Fingeret, Page McCullough. *It Brought a Richness to Me: A Resource Manual for Participatory Literacy Practitioners.* (Durham, NC: Literacy South, 1993). ID #: 943.

This resource manual is based on a participatory, learner-centered approach to learning. It is valuable as a resource for both staff development and literacy instruction. This was our basic "text" for the Learner at the Center Institutes. Available from:

Peppercorn Press
P.O. Box 1766
Durham, NC 27702
Phone (919) 688-9313

Lytle, Susan, Alisa Belzer, Rebecca Reumann. *Initiating Practitioner Inquiry: Adult Literacy Teachers, Tutors, and Administrators Research Their Practice.* (Philadephia: National Center on Adult Literacy, 1993). ID #: 999. NCAL Technical Report TR93-11.

Using data from a community of teachers, tutors, and administrators who conducted research into their daily practice as part of Adult Literacy Practitioner Inquiry Project, this report explores how literacy practitioners initiate inquiry by generating questions and methods.

Pfeiffer, J. William, ed. *The Encyclopedia of Group Activities: 150 Practical Designs for Successful Facilitating.* (San Diego: University Associates, c1989). ID #: 1084. ISBN 0-88390-231-1.

A large assortment of activities appropriate for many different group settings and purposes. Topic areas include personal awareness, values clarification, communication, group process, and feedback.

Vella, Jane. *Learning to Teach: Training of Trainers for Community Development.* (Washington, DC: OEF International, 1989). ID #: 578.

A simple, useful book designed to train trainers in developing countries. Activities and workshop sessions can be adapted for staff development in adult basic education programs in this country.

Vella, Jane Kathryn. *Learning to Listen, Learning to Teach.* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, c1994). ID #: 984. ISBN 1-55542-630-1.

Lessons learned and a set of participatory educational principles gleaned from long experience as an adult educator in different cultural settings.

Von Oech, Roger. *A Kick in the Seat of the Pants: Using Your Explorer, Artist, Judge, & Warrior to Be More Creative.* (New York: Harper & Row, c1986). ID #: 570. ISBN 0-06-015528-0.

The four roles of the creative process are outlined along with exercises designed to access these strengths found in all individuals. This book and its companion, listed next, are sources for energizing and reflecting activities. A set of activity and reflection cards based on the four creative processes may be ordered.

Von Oech, Roger. *A Whack on the Side of the Head: How You Can Be More Creative.* (New York: Warner Books, c1990). ID #: 565. ISBN 0-446-39-158-1.

The creative process is presented as "fun, necessary, and accessible to all."

Wrigley, Heide Spruck and Gloria J. Guth. *Bringing Literacy to Life: Issues and Options in Adult ESL Literacy.* Aquirre International, 1992). ID #: 42.

Excellent resource book on all facets of adult ESL: approaches and materials, multilevel classes, technology, native language literacy, assessment and curriculum. Has a good explanation of approaches to staff development.

Readings

The following articles and resources were used during the Literacy Trainers Institutes and the Learner at the Center Institutes:

Arnold, Rick, Bev Burke, Carl James, D'Arcy Martin, and Barb Thomas. *Educating for a Change.* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 1991.)

Auerbach, Elsa Roberts. *Making Meaning, Making Change: A Guide to Participatory Curriculum Development for Adult ESL and Family Literacy.* (McHenry, IL: Delta Systems, 1992.)

Bhasin, Kamila. "If Top-down Development Is Out, Then Top-down Training Is Also Out." (*Convergence*, XXIV, 4, 1991, pp. 10-14.)

Chisman, Forrest and Renee Woodworth. *The Promise of JOBS: Policies, Programs and Possibilities*. (Washington, DC: The Southport Insititute for Policy Analysis, 1992.)

Colette, Marian, Beverly Woliver, Mary Beth Bingman, and Juliet Merrifield. *Getting There: A Curriculum for JOBS Participants*. (Williamsburg, KY: Whitley County Communities for Children, 1992.)

Fingeret, Hanna Arlene. "Social Network: A New Perspective on Independence and Illiterate Adults." (*Adult Education Quarterly*, 33, 1983, pp. 133-146.)

Fingeret, Hanna Arlene. "The Social and Historical Context of Participatory Literacy Education." In Fingeret, Hanna Arlene and Paul Jurmo, (Eds.) (*Participatory Literacy Education: New Directions for Continuing Education*, No. 42. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1989.)

Fingeret, Hanna Arlene. *Adult Literacy Education: Current and Future Directions, An Update*. (ERIC National Clearinghouse on Adult, Career and Vocational Education, 1992.)

Fingeret, Hanna. *It Belongs to Me: A Guide to Portfolio Assessment in Adult Education Programs*. (Durham, NC: Literacy South, 1993.)

Freeman, Deirdre. "Reflections on the LAC's ESOL Institute Follow-up." (*Information Update*, New York: Literacy Assistance Center. v. 5, 3, March, 1989.)

Griswold, Karen (1989) "Collaborative Work Groups: A Strategy for Staff and Program Development." (*Information Update*, New York: Literacy Assistance Center. v. 5, 3, March, 1989.)

Hope, Ann, Sally Timmel and Chris Hodzi. *Training for Transformation*. (Gweru, Zimbabwe: Mambo Press,1984.)

King, Jereann, Jonathan M. Estes, Hanna Fingeret, Page McCullough. *It Brought a Richness to Me: A Resource Manual for Participatory Literacy Practitioners*. (Durham, NC: Literacy South, 1993.)

King, Jereann and others. *Just Like When*. (Durham, NC: Literacy South, no date.)

Kutner, Mark, (1992). *Staff Development for ABE and ESL Teachers and Volunteers*. (ERIC National Clearinghouse on Literacy Education, 1992.)

Laubach Literacy Action. *Managing the Workshop: The Seven Steps of Planning*. (Trainer Touchstone, v. 10, 2, Spring, 1993)

Merrifield, Juliet et al. *Life at the Margins: Profiles of Adults With Low Literacy Skills*. (Knoxville, TN: Center for Literacy Studies, 1992)

Senge, Peter. "The Leader's New Work: Building Learning Organizations." (*Sloan Management Review*, Vol. 37, 1, Fall, 1990.)

Wheeler, Mardy and Jeanie Marshall. *The Trainer Type Inventory (TTI): Identifying Training Style Preferences*. (San Diego, CA: University Associates, Inc., 1987.)

Wrigley, Heide Spruck and Gloria J. A. Guth. *Bringing Literacy to Life: Issues and Options in Adult ESL Literacy*. (San Mateo, CA: Aquirre International, 1993.)

The Center for Literacy Studies, part of the College of Education, University of Tennessee Knoxville, works to help build the capacity of communities and practitioners to meet the needs of adult learners, at the same time building the knowledge base of the field of adult literacy. Since its founding in 1988, CLS has developed projects in Tennessee and Appalachia in areas of research, program development and public policy. In 1993, the center was designated the Tennessee Literacy Resource Center by the Governor, part of a national network of state literacy resource centers created by the National Literacy Act of 1991.

As the State Literacy Resource Center, our work focuses in three main areas: innovation and capacity building, dissemination of materials and best practices, and collaboration and technical assistance. Activities and services include a data base and loan collection of resource materials; a resource bank of programs and practitioners willing to share their expertise; an electronic communications link among literacy and ABE programs; staff development institutes and workshops; and technical and policy assistance. Seeds of Innovation, a periodic publication, pulls together resources, reflections, and reports on topics of interest to Tennessee adult literacy and basic skills practitioners.

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